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EDUCATION IN FREE INDIA

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THIS book surveys some of the important and pressing problems with which Indian education is at present confronted, especially those which have arisen since the attainment of national independence. The existing provisions for education and the many reforms now being advocated are here critically examined.

The author, who is Professor of Education in the Vidya Bhawan Teachers College, Udaipur, applies the energies of a fresh and vigorous mind, enriched by long and varied experience, to the discussion of such pivotal questions as the conscription of teachers, military training, the mobilization of youth and linguistic equality. His suggestions are constructive and practical. We are confident that this latest addition to Longmans' New Era Series will be of great interest and value to all who have at heart the progress of education in India.

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EDUCATION IN FREE INDIA

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TO

THE WELL-BEING OF
INDIAN YOUTH

PREFACE

Free India is destined to play an important rôle not only in Asia but in the new world set-up as a whole. But if she is to fulfil her destiny and to provide her sons that measure of happiness which is their due, she must solve her great educational problems quickly and efficiently.

There is no dearth of books on Indian education, but they generally have little more than academic interest. In this little book, I have discussed in a practical manner some of the educational problems that face the country—the problems of Conscription of Teachers, Mobilization of Youth, Linguistic Equality, etc. Several of the chapters in the book first appeared as articles in various journals which were written as and when the problems actually emerged after the attainment of national independence.

I am grateful to the following publishers and periodicals for permission to include my articles previously contributed to them:

(a) to "Teaching", Oxford University Press, Bombay, for (i) Training Teachers for a New Order, and (ii) Recreation for Teachers, and

(b) to the National Press Syndicate, India, for (i) The Conscription of Teachers, (ii) Education Through the Radio, (iii) Education under the New Constitution, (iv) Linguistic Equality in a New Democracy, and (v) New Light from Sevagram.

I should like to express my sense of indebtedness to Shri Bhagwan Dayal of Vidya Bhawan Teachers College, Udaipur, for reading the manuscript and correcting the proofs.

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The author's previously published articles entitled THE CONSCRIPTION OF TEACHERS, EDUCATION UNDER THE NEW CONSTITUTION, LINGUISTIC EQUALITY IN A NEW DEMOCRACY, EDUCATION THROUGH THE RADIO and NEW LIGHT FROM SEVAGRAM appear in this book by courtesy of the National Press Syndicate, India.

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CHAPTER I

THE TOUCHSTONE OF EDUCATION

THE dawn of freedom in the country after a century-and-a-half of foreign subjection brought forth a new realization among the people of the desirability of an early modification of the goals of life. As education happened to be one of the most effective instruments for bringing about such a change, the attention of the country was naturally directed towards the reformation of the educational system. People had realized, long before the materialization of their national aspirations for freedom, the intimate connection between the political structure and the educational system of a country. With the rise of nationalism there had arisen a corresponding awakening in the people that the foundations of the educational system that were unsuited to the genius of the country needed immediate reorientation. India had suffered considerably by the maladjustments of the educated youth to the physical, social and economic environments of the country. The birth of the National Scheme of Education adumbrated by Mahatma Gandhi was the result of the age-long discontent and ever-growing consciousness of the people.

After the re-birth of the free State of India the attention of the National Government, leaders, educationists and social reformers was focussed on the improvement of education in order to bring it into unison with the new set-up of the country. The Governments at the Centre and in the States came forward with big schemes to meet the popular needs and launched them with a view to providing at top-speed as much educational opportunity as possible to the illiterate masses. The problem of the reorganization of the educational system was also attacked on all fronts, such as the objectives of education, the ladders of the educational system, the emoluments of teachers, the medium of education and school administration.

There can be no two opinions about the tremendous influence exercised by such reforms upon the quality of education, but no fundamental improvement was achieved because no clear-cut objectives were put before the country under the changed circumstances. It is regrettable that such crucial problems of educational reform, though these have all along been the subjects of study and discussion among top-ranking educationists, seldom received adequate attention from our administrators and teachers. This state of affairs has been mainly responsible for the small advancement of educational philosophy in our country.

Mahatma Gandhi, who led the country to its long-cherished freedom, put before the people the aims and values of life in the social, economic and political fields and laid down constructive educational schemes for their realization. He diagnosed the basic needs of the country and focussed our attention on the vital social, cultural and economic aspects of life that could be promoted through a planned system of education. He knew full well that most of the ills of the time were primarily attributable to certain false values that the prevalent system of education cultivated in the young mind and in part also to a want of training of the human faculties. Once, while addressing a mass gathering of students, he remarked that a good student was one who kept his eyes straight, mind pure and hands unpolluted. That important training, according to him, was the touchstone of education. If education did not prepare the youth to conduct his life activities on these principles, the time he spent in the school during the formative period of his life was a complete waste. Those who have any active interest in, and experience of education, will agree that the test Mahatma Gandhi proposed was the real touchstone of education, and that it was so thorough that by applying it the soundness or otherwise of an educational system could be effectively proved. It is a truism to say that the administrators in the past were not so much interested in the development of the good qualities of head and heart as in the mere assimilation of knowledge by the children in whatever form or colour it was presented to them. This has been an outstanding motive of education in most of the countries where the rulers plan to retain their hold on the people by exploiting their uncritical mind. Such inadequate education has had a greatly deteriorating effect upon those who in their thousands emerge every year from schools.

It is astonishing that education, which should seek to develop the powers of observation and objectivity and to make the individual critical of what is happening around him, does not open his eyes. The education that we impart to our children fails to remove the curtain of ignorance and subjectivity from over their eyes. It does not train the individual to discriminate between good and evil. The whole system of education, which relies on the acquisition of knowledge through books and what has been presented with authority by teachers, is responsible for an uncritical approach to the problems of life by the educated youth. Students do not get sufficient opportunity for coming into intimate contact with the country's problems before entering into the real world. Such ineffective training in schools does not develop the thinking and reasoning power of students, and so, when later in life they are faced with the pressing problems of the community, the nation and the world, their minds refuse to work and they fail to rise to the occasion.

There is an intimate symbolic relationship between the eye, the mind and the hand. The eye symbolises the faculty of observation and objectivity, the cognitive aspect of one's experience; the mind, the thinking process before arriving at a decision, the effective aspect of one's experience; and the hand, the actions of man, the conative phase of human behaviour. The education of an individual for a correct response in life is, therefore, a problem of the training of the eye and the mind. If human behaviour responsible for the present world miseries was thoroughly investigated and analysed, one would come to the inevitable conclusion that all the wrongful deeds of man in the present century, in spite of his so-called better education, are attributable to his lack of keen observation, proper collection of facts, sympathetic consideration of others' difficulties and intelligent understanding of their problems and to his greater reliance on ears and failure to look at his own problems from the point of view of others.

It is distressing to note that the mind of the people is charged with passion, prejudice, orthodoxy, bigoted nationalism and bellicose tendencies. Our countrymen were under the false impression that the achievement of freedom was the highest and ultimate ideal, an end in itself, for which they put up a hard struggle during the last quarter of the present century. They had seldom realized that the achievement of freedom was only a means to an end, a means for the realization of the happiness and prosperity of the country.

The solution of all such difficult problems facing the country lies in the recognition of the fundamental truth that if a change in the outlook of the people was feasible, it could be effected only through a dominant change in the objectives and practice of education in every school. This important task of bringing about a new outlook in education can under no circumstances be entrusted to individual initiative or to State control. It ought to arise from constant mobilization of opinion among teachers, educational administrators and social reformers. The history of education in any country shows that, with the struggle for freedom of an individual in society, there always arises a corresponding consciousness in the field of education that the child should be freed from the tyranny of harsh and dictatorial methods and from outright indoctrination. The State exercised in the past a tremendous influence in bringing about a regimentation of the mind through a variety of methods in the form of controlled text-books, guarded selection of teachers, restricted freedom of thought and expression, and mechanized administration in the school. Such superimposition of State control upon the educational system, both direct and indirect, has been to a great extent responsible for a set pattern of human behaviour peculiarly suited to the wishes of the pressure groups. If one studied the history of the major world conflicts, one would immediately discover that the warring nations had little difficulty in mobilizing public opinion in their own favour under the garb of nationalism because of a complete absence of intelligent and critical understanding by the people of the background of the conflicts. It would be further realized that the men in power took advantage of the complete absence of training in the use of the eye, the mind and the hand on the part of those who emerged in their thousands from schools and universities.

To put the point that I have been emphasizing so far in a nutshell, our nation which is engaged today in reorganizing the educational system and resetting its methodology, must clearly keep in mind the test that every educational experience must satisfy. Every instrument of education that is designed to mould the character of the student should be subjected to a test on the touchstone which the Father of the Nation put forward before the country even up to the last moment of his life, that no human response should be a piece of hasty action but the result of a coordinated effort of the eye, the mind and the hand. The demand for such a reform in education as will produce keen observers, reflective thinkers and strong-willed persons, becomes all the more important and urgent when one considers the large number of people needed for taking over the responsibility of running the administrative machinery of a new democracy. Such balanced persons are also needed in every walk of life in order to eradicate the evils that have become part and parcel of our national life.

The struggle of modern man reveals that he is keen to evolve a new way of life that would guide his effort to enrich the treasure of human experience. Such opportune moments are rare in the life of a nation when every force is found exerting its full influence to bring about a change, whether for good or for ill. It is natural that in such extraordinary moments in the life of a nation, currents and counter-currents of constructive or destructive nature should be found sweeping over the entire land. The mobilization of a force common to all interests or groups is possible only through a planned system of education of a right kind.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION AND LIFE

EDUCATION and life are intimately connected with each other. It is a truism that if education does not prepare an individual for the realities of life and if it fails to enhance his happiness, it will be universally regarded as completely inadequate. The education that we have been imparting to our children has remained so ineffective that it has always maintained a gulf between life and learning. The aspirations of many parents who, in spite of their meagre earnings, manage to educate their children, are shattered when on emerging from schools these are found to be misfits in the home and in the community. Such maladjustments have reduced many a home to utter misery. A student, in many cases, finds himself in a miserable plight when he enters the world. In the home he hates the older people many of whom have had no privilege of schooling, and looks down upon the domestic environment. Being a victim of unemployment in the community, he finds his previous education unremunerative and is unable to fulfil his rights and duties as a citizen in society at large.

The problems that need immediate attention are the establishment of fundamental objectives of education, the evolution of a suitable methodology, the planning of school environment, the organization of school discipline, proper administration of institutions, and the form State direction and control should take. All these aim at the enhancement of the personality of the whole man. I should not be misunderstood to mean that these vital problems of education are not receiving the attention of our leaders, educationists, reformers and Government authorities. What I mean is that these problems are being tackled without any scientific investigation of the social evils and the immediate and long-term needs of the country. The psychological, cultural and sociological considerations seldom form the bases of educational reforms.

The ultimate aim of education is said to be the formation of character and the preparation of an individual for intelligent citizenship. The recognition of this fundamental motive of education brings out another factor for consideration, namely, whether the child's eye should be directed towards the existing social structure of our society or towards the shape of things to come, say, after a score of years; for the school-going children of today will not participate in the existing society but will form the stuff of the society that will emerge in fifteen or twenty years. This consideration assumes a special significance in a country which is subjected to constant changes in the social, economic and political domains. Such changes are so sudden or swift that it is difficult to prophesy what the world of tomorrow would be like. It is, therefore, necessary that before attempting to bring the child's education into unison with the needs of society and the nation, we must answer the important question in regard to the present needs and the future set-up. These two points of view must be clearly kept in mind before any educational planning for the future is attempted, because there is always a danger that the child educated under the existing environmental forces will not be able to adjust himself to the new environment. It is always a period of national crisis when the new generation of youth emerging from schools and colleges finds it hard to reorient its ideals and life according to the changing times.

Nature has endowed every living organism with the power to change so that in the interaction with its ever-changing physical environment, it is able to adapt itself and preserve the identity of its species. Man's life would have been happier, had he also been as near to nature as the lower animals. But as he has marched along the path of progress on account of his inborn tendencies that give him superiority over other animals, his contact with the natural environment has considerably diminished and he has to live mainly under the influence of man-made environment which unfortunately changes at a rate faster than the human capacity for adjustment. There is a kind of race between man and his environment, a difficulty or an asset of his own creation. Once he acquires a full adjustment or a mastery over the new set-up of conditions, he is again successful in the building up of a new environment quite different from the preceding one. There is, therefore, always a conflict between man's life and his environment, provided there is no superior force to help him to change and to follow the ever-changing social, economic and political environment. That superior force in man's life is his education which enables him to go ahead and to adapt himself to the constant changes in society. Cottage industries that once flourished throughout the country are said to have died out because of the absence of proper education. The people who were engaged in producing commodities of artistic designs during their leisure and who passed on their skills from generation to generation were taken aback when similar articles began to be imported into the country to compete with the local goods. On account of the want of proper education the artisans were subjected to maladjustments and the fine arts gradually decayed to the limits of total extinction. At such moments of crisis the struggle for adaptation and existence is facilitated for men by proper education which enables them to change with the fast moving times. Another example connected directly with education is provided by the conditions that are prevailing in the country today after the achievement of freedom. The educated youth of the country who have had their education during the period of political subjection or who have recently emerged from schools and colleges are showing the same bent of mind and are behaving in the same manner as they did under the old conditions, to the total disregard of the new situation created by the transfer of power in the country. Our youth are victims of the old legacy; they exhibit the same defiance of authority, preserve the same revolutionary methods and refuse to give their wholehearted co-operation to the National Government in the rebuilding of the nation. The student community and the youth can on no account be blamed for their failure to adapt themselves to the changed conditions. The direct responsibility for the improper outlook and behaviour of youth lies with the wrong education that they received and with the political conditions under which they received that education. I am, therefore, inclined to believe that similar difficulties may arise if school children receive education under a certain set of conditions and are so static as not to be able to adapt themselves to the changed conditions. The measure of the soundness of an educational system, therefore, is the extent to which it can make an individual dynamic in outlook and mobile in character.

The chief pivot of our educational planning should be this important aspect of education, otherwise the future of the nation is fraught with great dangers. It will be criminal on the part of our political leaders and administrators if school children imbibe the spirit of the existing dominant ideology and receive a stamp of the times. I want to give an added emphasis to this point of view because every educational institution these days is becoming increasingly a centripetal force for the influx of political ideologies, each power or pressure group trying to retain its hold on the young mind as was customary during the British regime, only with the difference of the change of the ruling class. There is no denying the fact that the country which has recently broken the shackles of slavery needs the youthful energy of the student community for rebuilding the nation. Youth can under no circumstances be kept aloof from politics, but they have to be so trained and directed that they are immune to orthodox indoctrination and bias. This is the chief function of education which it must fulfil.

At this stage it is worthwhile to differentiate between the functions of a school and a college. The aims of these two classes of educational institutions are not identical; the former is exclusively concerned with the formation of character and the latter with the preparation for a career in addition to general education. It is during the period of early life that the true foundations of character are laid in the child, while collegiate education aims at training in the arts and crafts of life, because students, immediately after leaving the doors of such institutions, expect to enter the real world. Hence, the education of people at higher levels must direct their attention to the immediate problems of society at large and must prepare them for active participation in the affairs of the community. This fundamental difference between school and college education must be given an ever-increasing recognition in our planning. The school should not be allowed to remain a focus of attention of the country's political parties. All such efforts must be resisted by teachers and by the school administration. Our education in the past has suffered to a great extent under such destructive influences and it is now high time that a genuine effort was made to keep the schools clean from such vicious propaganda.

CHAPTER III

MISGUIDED YOUTH

It was during the Swadeshi movement that the student community was first drawn into politics. The Government of the time was mainly responsible for this in so far as it issued circular after circular strictly forbidding students to join any political meeting or organization. It threatened students with dire punishment for any violation of such orders. These provocative circulars supplied the flame to the fuse and a tremendous uprising among students was the result. Since then they have been taking an active part in politics and their participation before independence was considered a part of the general struggle for freedom and progress.

The Youth Movement in India has passed through six important phases and unless we take note of the different factors that contributed to its formation, growth and development, we shall not be able to appreciate it adequately. I have already referred to the first phase, the Swadeshi Movement, a period of burning nationalism in the country which inspired our youth with intense political consciousness. The second phase, between 1920 and 1928, was characterized by the boycott of schools and colleges and the students' active rôle in the national struggle. It was in this period that many revolutionary organizations came into existence, because the youth of our country had realized by that time that freedom would not be attained by appeals but by bringing about a revolution in the country. The third phase, between 1928 and 1934, saw the strengthening of students' and youth organizations. Students left politics to a great extent, and their interests became mainly academic. But, with the coming of the

Non-Cooperation Movement, students again came out from schools and colleges in their thousands at the call of Mahatma Gandhi and joined the national movement. Although the Non-Cooperation Movement was suspended, yet the idea of harnessing the youthful energy and rich idealism of the students was not entirely lost sight of. The Simon Commission and Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha Movement were the other fields of activity of the Indian youth. Till 1935 the revolutionary upsurge was at its height in Northern India, though all its leaders were locked up in jails. In the fourth phase of the Youth Movement up to 1940, ideological conflicts and opportunist rôles were exhibited among students. Many students became Forward Blockists, Royists, Communists, Independents, etc. and others retained their Gandhian leanings. The fifth phase, between 1941 and 1943, was a landmark in the history of the Youth movement in India, 'a bugle call to the youth and the student community.' The whole movement of 1942 was run by only three forces, students, workers and peasants. During the sixth phase, our enthusiastic young men showed lively interest in politics aiming to build up their organizations, to establish close contacts with leaders and to take up specific tasks which would draw them nearer to the workers and peasants. The youth of the country worked under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi from the time of the Swadeshi Movement and helped him till India was freed from the foreign yoke. After 15 August, 1947, the Day of Independence, some students showed a different frame of mind which ultimately resulted in the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi who was till a few months earlier considered by them to be the Father of the Nation and the inspirer of their movement.

This last aspect of our youth movement constitutes a problem in itself. Most of our political parties which claim to be progressive, have been responsible for creating this state of affairs, which is detrimental to the interests alike of youth and society. Even the leaders of the Congress wielded undue influence over the students and guided their activities to a great extent. In normal times, the politician is inclined to emphasize the students' first duty of concentrating on their studies and making themselves fit to play their rôle in the future. Educational institutions are always described by them as the centres of learning and places where boys and girls prepare themselves for their future duties as true citizens of the country. The period of education of adolescents and young men, according to them, should mainly concern the cognitive and affective sides of life. Conation should have a place only when the student enters the real world. But in practice the matter stands differently. Whenever the politician has been in need of voluntary and enthusiastic workers, he has naturally turned to the young men and the student community and appealed to their emotions. The advice against participation in politics offered in the past has been conveniently forgotten in order to raise an army of young workers. The youth of the country has been captured and wantonly exploited by interested parties. To grind their own axes, the communal organizations like the Muslim League created a body of students which worked in their interest. Communal parties in general and the Muslim League in particular poisoned the young mind with fanaticism. The students who had been misguided by irresponsible leadership and drawn into active politics for nearly a decade fell now easy victims to communal propaganda. Thus the Muslim student and youth organizations began to be formed in 1937 to stem the growing tide of nationalism. Mohammad Ali Jinnah extended his blessing to such communal student organizations and regularly presided over the annual Conferences of the All-India Muslim Students' Federation. He always appealed to Muslim youth "not to be deluded, but to assert themselves and be prepared for sacrifices for the advancement of the community". The orthodox Hindus did not lag behind, but on the contrary followed suit, organized the Hindu Students' Federation and infused new life into the R. S. S. with a view to establishing a Hindu Raj in India. With the dawn of freedom and the partition of the country, communal feelings rose to the highest pitch. After 15 August 1947, the sub-continent passed through catastrophic changes: colossal destruction of life and property was inflicted on the country. The misguided youth had their full share in sullying the fair name of India. The climax was reached when a Hindu youth shot Mahatma Gandhi dead with bullets through his chest. One can see in these movements a distortion of the ideals of a sound youth movement because of their wrong attitude towards politics.

It is quite obvious from such happenings that students and young men generally have not only failed to adapt themselves to the changed conditions after the dawn of freedom, but are also determined to preserve their old methods. It is also true that the youth who had been kept constantly engaged in politics throughout the struggle for freedom have not been mobilized for creative and constructive purposes in the interest of the nation. The youthful energy is there, the desire to rebuild the nation is there, and the requisite training to work in organized bodies is there, but what the youth of the country lacks today is sound guidance and opportunity for the expression of their energy through useful channels.

With the achievement of freedom, the circumstances of the country have altogether changed. The students in schools and colleges, if they are to become capable leaders and efficient public workers in the India of tomorrow, should concentrate on their studies, build up their character and receive training in the art and craft of citizenship. They should refuse to be exploited by political or communal organizations for which they have worked in the past. It is high time that these communal organizations realized the gravity of the situation and allowed the students of educational institutions to grow to maturity in thought and judgment without any unhealthy influence. There should not be any kind of inducement or persuasion for active participation in political activities which would involve serious distraction to them in their studies. Participation in occasional processions and meetings should be freely allowed. It may be argued that such active interest in politics is likely to bring the bitterness of political controversies within the four walls of the schools. I do not consider it to be a valid argument. Students cannot be prevented from holding divergent opinions. The ability to tolerate other opinions than one's own is one of the valuable lessons to be learnt in schools and colleges. If the students are able to find occasional outlets for their political enthusiasm, it will enable them all the better to bear with those who hold opposite views. In brief, I advocate active interest in politics and not active participation in political controversies. The problem of young people who have left schools and colleges and have entered the real world is different from those who are still under training. The youthful energy of the former will have to be mobilized in the interest of the nation. They should have a definite constructive programme before them to that their energies may be canalized for useful purposes. The problem of mobilization of youth and the canalization of their energy will be dealt with in one of the following chapters.

I would now say a few words about the rôle of the teacher and the school that are responsible for handling the youth within their spheres. I do not see any reason why an educational institution should not be run as a fully democratic unit with a rôle for every student in all matters except a few. It should be possible for the school to integrate the various extracurricular activities. Our task is not to produce a class of people who will play the rôle of blind followers to be exploited by vested interests, but to make our students good citizens of tomorrow and the future rulers of the country.

A teacher's personal attitude towards politics counts to a very great extent. He should not be inclined to think in terms of authority which a modern youth enjoying the new-born freedom of the country, is not willing to accept. If the teacher talks freely with his students on political and other matters with a sympathetic frame of mind, many of our present difficulties will immediately cease to exist. If a better pupil-teacher relationship is maintained in and outside the classroom, students will not consider teachers to be authorities imposed from without, but true guides, friends and inspirers. The feeling of comradeship engendered between teachers and students will prove beneficial to both the groups. The thoughts I have expressed here are not new in the field of education. Many schools in the West as well as in India have achieved substantial success in this objective. It behoves us teachers to do the best we can to set the young generation now under our guidance on the right path and not let them waste their time and energy in imitative politics outside the schools.

CHAPTER IV

MILITARY EDUCATION

THE nation welcomed Sardar Baldeo Singh's announcement in the Indian Parliament of the Government of India's decision to raise a National Cadet Corps. As the Defence Minister himself admitted, there had been a great public demand since the partition of the country for universal military training for India's youth "for national interests as well as to build the character of young men in the country." Although he did not mention in the Parliament that this demand for military training was felt with greater intensity after the death of Mahatma Gandhi, who had been killed at the hands of a young assassin, this programme could be regarded as a definite psychological move to curb the growing menace of moral perversion. The same youth who had joined the battle of freedom a few years back under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi now showed a terrible frame of mind of which Godse was only a symptom. It seemed as if youth had gone off the rails. The National Executive of the Socialist Party which met in Delhi in February, 1948, to consider the situation created by the death of Gandhiji, passed a resolution calling upon the Government to enact a law so that men between 18 and 19 years of age could be compulsorily drafted into military training and women could be asked to volunteer for the same purpose. While addressing a public meeting at Navasari on March 2, 1948, Sri Jai Prakash Narain, the Socialist leader, reiterated this popular demand and suggested that national conscription of all the boys of 18 and 19 years of age should be ordered with a provision for voluntary recruitment of girls of the same age group, so that the energies of young men and women could be canalized for the benefit of the nation. The inopportune death of Gandhiji, according to him, was a tragedy of errors. These errors in the body politic could not be foreseen and eradicated in time before a national calamity occurred. Many important persons also had associated themselves with the disease and given an impetus to the growth of the semi-military organizations in the country. The leaders realized the root cause of the poisonous propaganda only when it ultimately claimed Gandhiji as its victim. Pandit Nehru, realizing Government's immense responsibility in the same connection has made fervent appeals in the press and on the platform to our people to wean the misguided sections of the youth of the country from their ruinous course. All that I have said here shows that a truly democratic Government cannot allow the forming of private armies, that a large majority of India's youth like semi-military training, and that owing to the lack of such opportunities their latent energies have found expression in serious and undesirable activities. Some of the State Governments such as those of Bombay, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa deserve to be congratulated on their wisdom in inviting young people to join the scheme of physical instruction and military training in their respective States. Pandit Keshav Deo Malaviya, Minister for Development, Uttar Pradesh announced the starting of a new scheme, as an experimental measure, for the development of physical culture. "Exactly at 6 a. m.," said he, "young boys and men will collect at various physical culture centres all over Lucknow and training in preliminary collective physical exercises and military drill will be imparted to them." An announcement of a similar nature was made by Shri S. K. Patil, President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, regarding the enrolment within a year of 50,000 multi-purpose volunteers who would receive military training under the auspices of the Congress Government. In short, all these schemes for military training were adumbrated with a view to canalizing the energies of misguided youth for the benefit of the nation. The move, no doubt, was psychological as far as its objectives were concerned. But one has to pause for a moment to think how such a programme in a vacuum can really solve the problems of the modern youth.

A word now as to the objectives of military training in the field of education would not be out of place here. Sardar Baldeo Singh, briefly recounting the recommendations of the National Cadet Corps Committee, said that it had been decided to form three divisions—A Senior Division for College and University students, a Junior Division for school students and a Girls' Division for girl students. He disclosed the objects of raising each division separately and in detail. A cursory view of the objectives enumerated by him may lead one to conclude that they are twofold. The primary object of the Senior Division was "to provide service training to undergraduates in order to build up a potential reserve of officers for the three armed forces, while the Junior Division for boys and the Girls' Division for girls were designed to build up discipline, character and physique of the cadets." I think there was also another object of the military training of young persons which was not mentioned by the Defence Minister. It aims at keeping the misguided boys on the rails, to satisfy the long felt urge for military training, to canalize their energies and to nationalize their military instincts in order to put a check on the rearing up of private armies. As a matter of fact, the third objective was mainly responsible for the early decision of the matter.

One sees no objection to the first aim regarding the

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building up of a potential reserve of officers for the three armed forces. The need for such a reserve force may have been felt in India, particularly as a result of the aggression in Kashmir, the raising of 'National Guards' on a military basis by Pakistan and the political crisis in Hyderabad. Only four days after the announcement in the Indian Parliament, President Truman while addressing the joint session of the Congress, recommended universal military training and conscription as measures for meeting the communist threat to the world peace. I do not in any way suggest here whether or not India will be dragged into a third world war if it occurs. But certainly military training of India's youth is intended as a safeguard against exposure to such risks and dangers in the future. Pandit Nehru himself confessed at the Constructive Workers Conference at Wardha that, although he did not want war, he had, in his capacity as a Minister, to talk about the preparations for war, irrespective of the question as to how far non-violence could be applied as a measure for the defence of the country.

The second objective which attempts to put an indirect check on the raising of private armies is a psychological one and will be appreciated by all those who have the good of the youth and of the nation at heart. No democratic country could ever allow the responsibility of organizing its youth on military or semi-military lines to pass into the hands of private bodies.

The third objective, with special reference to the Junior Division, is said to be educational. "The organization", said the Defence Minister, "is designed to build up the character and physique of the cadets, to infuse into them a sense of discipline and stimulate their interest in the defence of the country." This aim is the most controversial of all the three objectives. I should, therefore, like to refer to some questions which need pondering and upon the answer to which rests all our future programme of military education in schools.

The first is whether it is possible to conceive a state of affairs in which military education could satisfactorily build up the character of our boys and infuse into them a sense of discipline.

The second question is how far it is possible to reconcile the two divergent methods of inculcating discipline in our youth, one based on the principle of self-realization and the other on that of superimposition.

No one can doubt the validity of the fundamental truth that discipline requires the individual to have many valuable and emotional experiences. The mere performance of overt acts of a disciplinary nature is not sufficient. The individual must understand the justice of restraints placed on his conduct for a specific good purpose and must agree that they are necessary and right. Military training has meant a type of training that would make a group of individuals instantly responsive to the will of the commander. Instantaneous obedience to commands and precision of movement in regard to certain signals have been the ends which military discipline has sought. But real discipline makes use of the positive rather than the negative aspects of control. The positive measures are conducive to self-reliance and self-control. Speaking of discipline, Gandhiji once remarked, "Discipline has nothing to do with artificial restraint upon the students' all-round growth." Another important question which comes in is whether it is possible to build up the character of our boys and girls without cultivating the qualities of the heart. We have seen enough of that education which regarded the development of the mind and the body as all in all. Gandhiji on this question said, "Man is neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for the making of the whole man and constitutes the true economics of education ." One of the chief functions of discipline is said to be the preparation of the pupils for effective participation in an organized adult society which, while allowing each individual much freedom in gratifying his desires and realizing his ambitions, also demands that the individual should inhibit those desires and repress those ambitions which are inconsistent with social welfare. All these facts may lead us to the conclusion that discipline received from military education falls very short of our expectations as compared to self-discipline which is spontaneous and comes from within. The educators have, therefore, to be very cautious at every step when they are asked to adopt any unmodified scheme of military education in their schools. I take this opportunity to sound a note of warning. This does not mean that the necessity for the factor of control can be altogether eliminated. The directive force of the commander's will in the case of military discipline is replaced in the theory of democracy by the directive force representing the collective will of the people. Positive discipline, therefore, is itself a discipline imposed by the collective will of the people. Hence, what I object to is a craze for military discipline, and not military education as such. At no cost must the students' mind be caged.

The other possible difficulty, which is a real one, is that of the combination of military or superimposed discipline with the positive aspects of social and individual control or self-discipline. If military education is introduced in schools, what should we do, I ask, with these systems of progressive methods of building up discipline in boys and girls which are finding a prominent place in the schools of today? As the two methods are contradictory in their approach and quite opposed to each other in their effect, it is necessary that the programme of the school is so arranged that the child is not forced to grow under two conflicting influences. It would be a hindrance rather than a help to the normal growth of the individual if the arrangements were otherwise.

No sane person can minimise the need and importance of physical culture with a military bias in the case of girls, who have shown in recent times that they greatly lack in the art of self-defence and do not possess sufficient courage and strength to ward off attacks upon them. The Kunzru Committee, therefore, deserves to be congratulated on having recommended, at an opportune moment in their report, cadet training of a suitable kind for girls, in order "to develop the personality of the girls, to make them more self-reliant, and to build up their physique."

It is fully expected that the limited force sought to be raised under the projected scheme will require no compulsion. The question of compulsion can come in only when the scope of enrolment is so widened as to accommodate every young person at college and school. I hope the day will soon come when every young man in an educational institution will benefit by the scheme without the danger of being nurtured in a fixed environment of water-tight control. What I object to most is the ever-growing tendency in us to make military education the base for building up discipline in our school boys and girls. This craze must be checked if the country is to preserve the ideals for which Gandhiji lived and died.

CHAPTER V

THE MOBILIZATION OF YOUTH

Before India achieved her freedom, social service and participation in civic affairs was looked upon with suspicion by the alien Government. Any person who attempted to raise or reform the community was either penalized or branded disloyal. The times have altogether changed and with the dawn of freedom the national Governments at the Centre and in the States are feeling, with an ever-increasing intensity, the need for mobilizing the national resources and man-power, with a view to ameliorating the disheartening conditions of the teeming millions of India. The need for social service becomes still more important when one sees the colossal task ahead with the poor national resources at our disposal. Realizing the urgency of this problem, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, once remarked in his address to a Conference that gradually he was coming to the conclusion that what the country needed presently was conscription, not for military purposes, but for social work. He further said that conscription of social workers was the only way by which men and women could be effectively employed for the good of the whole nation. Before I take up the question of conscription or persuasion as a suitable method of social work, I would like to discuss a few other things.

It is true that the energies of young people, peasants, workers and others were till recently directed towards driving out the foreign power from Indian soil. But soon after the country emerged as an independent nation they were faced with a different situation with no constructive programme before them. It is, therefore, high time that the country educated the people in scientific methods of social work and put before them an attractive programme.

It is worth while to trace here briefly the history of social service in India. The humanitarian urge and religious inspiration have been the two most powerful motives in all forms of social effort. The type of social work carried on in India may, therefore, be spoken of as custodial, being based on the natural feeling of comradeship of mankind. Although many hospitals, orphanages, homes for defectives, etc. sprang up in different parts of the country, yet the method of approach in this form of social service was too narrow to produce any permanent result. The scope and the vastness of social work has been defined clearly by J. M. Kumarappa of the Tata Graduate School of Social Work, Bombay. "Modern social work", he says, "seeks not only to bring about a proper adjustment of individuals and groups to their environment, but also to improve the conditions which make adjustment difficult for many reasons. The accomplishment of either of these objectives is dependent upon the accomplishment of the other." Some people's idea of social service is so narrow that it includes only those activities which are temporary in scope and nature. To them providing drinking water for wayfarers on a hot day or rendering first aid in a fair are the only genuine fields of social work. Social workers in India today must leave the traditional practice and adopt a constructive approach to social problems in order to produce permanent results.

Most of our existing social workers, whose number is negligible, are untrained, and, as a consequence, our social work is unscientific. The reasons are not very difficult to find. We have not placed social work on a dignified plane and have never demanded any professional qualifications and standards from those choosing this career. We have also failed to direct the attention of our educated youth towards this new profession. Neither persuasion nor conscription will, therefore, be helpful until we make people conscious of its great need for the country and set up in them an exacting discipline and unshakable faith in the task. I should like to indicate here the lines on which our educated youth might be mobilized for active social work with a view to building our nation as fast as possible without loss of efficiency.

Interest in social work has to be cultivated in a young man from his early childhood when certain definite attitudes towards life are being formed in the school. Social service is a vital instinctive urge of adolescence, the fulfilment of which is essential to the fullest growth of the individual. To ascertain the truth of this statement, D. K. Hingorani of the Teachers' Training College, Hyderabad (Sind), issued a questionnaire in 1943 to 240 local High School students. He suggested ten alternative aims of life and the boys were asked to give their first three preferences. It was the service of the community and the country which scored a majority of 93 first preferences. It fared no worse in the second and third preferences. This experiment clearly demonstrates that there is an instinctive urge in the mind of the adolescent for the service of the community and of the nation. It is, therefore, the duty of the school to sublimate this instinct, to infuse social ideals into the young and to canalize the urge for national purposes. The rôle of students, who will be the active workers of tomorrow, in the reconstruction of national life is of supreme importance. What they need at the present moment is proper guidance from teachers as well as from the national leaders. The question of social service and constructive activities suited to the student community has been raised, time and again, during the last quarter of the present century. Students from all parts of the country constantly sought Gandhiji's advice on a constructive programme which they could undertake during their school or college life. Gandhiji always emphasized a constructive programme for students which could be carried out by them during their leisure without interference with their studies. The fourteen-point constructive programme for students drawn by S. N. Agarwal and approved by Gandhiji, indicates the fascinating field which the student community must explore if their education is to stand in good stead when they enter life as full-fledged citizens.

Closely related to this problem is the education of teachers for social work. Their training in the art of scientific social work is bound to serve a twofold purpose. Teachers equipped with this art will not only be able to guide the students' activities more satisfactorily and efficiently, but they will also be able to participate more effectively in civic and social programmes for the improvement of the community. This will elevate their position and win for them public confidence and support. Teachers as a class have played a passive role in determining the kind of social organization needed in India, although they may have thought more on the problem than the average citizen of the country because of the nature of their profession.

I therefore think that teachers should participate actively in community and national affairs and do their level best to ameliorate the conditions of the down-trodden masses. Active interest in social work may not be possible for them till their attention has been directed towards it during their academic career in general and their professional training in particular. Training Colleges should, therefore, be alert to the challenge to direct the teachers' attention to community problems on a realistic basis.

These institutions through specialized courses ought to give teachers under training some idea of the great need and possibilities of social service and also provide some practical training which will stand them in good stead later.

A few Training Colleges which have realized the importance of social work for teachers, have started short elementary courses in order to develop in them a social outlook and interest in social service. American educators are more conscious of this need than we are in India, although we need such training more than they do. In an effort to find what teachers' training institutions in America were doing about this problem, the Community Service Centre of Teachers College, Columbia, issued, in 1944, a questionnaire to about 225 such institutions. Only about 80 replies were received, but they revealed that those institutions were aware of the situation and had tried to make provision to meet it. In India the conditions are different. If a similar questionnaire were issued to the teacher-training institutions of our country their replies would reveal a poor and disheartening result. Few institutions may be offering such programmes. The Vidya Bhawan Teachers College in Udaipur arranges towards the end of the regular session a short course of six weeks for training in social work. It is hoped that the teacher-training institutions, preparing teachers both for urban and for rural areas, will soon introduce such courses with a view to equipping young people with the techniques and procedures of scientific social service.

Other professional institutions which train physicians, surgeons, lawyers, labour officers, experts in agriculture, etc., also should not ignore this responsibility. We know the frame of mind of such experts, who, instead of enhancing the welfare of the poor and of ignorant masses, exploit them for their personal and ignoble ends. Is the training imparted to them, I ask, really conducive to bringing about the greater happiness of the common people?

The Government of Uttar Pradesh deserves to be congratulated on their wisdom in making social service compulsory for those wishing to enter Government service. Throughout the State no graduate now becomes eligible for Government employment until he has obtained a diploma in social work awarded by the Government after a year's training. The plan is worth considering also by other State Governments which are intending to mobilize the youth in national interest.

Every graduate entering a professional college should have a background of social sciences acquired during graduation. He should have knowledge of Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, and an insight into human nature as revealed by Biology and Psychology. The Universities should, therefore, introduce social studies into the undergraduate curriculum.

All our plans for mobilizing young people for social work will prove futile if they are not trained to perform their duties under the supervision of professionally trained social workers and youth leaders. The education of professionally trained workers and youth leaders is, therefore, a problem immediately to be tackled.

Young men and women of to-day are like rolling stock that can be carried away by the slightest force, provided the track laid before them is in consonance with their psychological urges. Modern youth, therefore does not need a negative approach, but re-education and mobilization of his youthful energy for constructive and useful ends for the advantage of the nation as a whole. If my conclusions are right and the suggestions for the mobilization of our youth suitable, persuasion may prove even more effective than conscription for social work.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONSCRIPTION OF TEACHERS

THE ideal of universal compulsory education in India to be realized in five years and the conscription of teachers to carry out that ideal, were emphasized by the Education Minister of India, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in Parliament. He revealed that the All-India Educational Conference held the view that there should be some kind of educational conscription for five years during which every literate man or woman in the country would be expected to put in a period of service as a teacher of the nation. The whole country, keen on the education of our children, welcomed this statement made at an opportune time from the Government benches. This was anticipated by Shri C. Rajagopalachari thirty-six years ago. "The object of this paper" wrote Rajaji, "is to make a somewhat novel suggestion on this point—the extension of the principle of compulsion, almost universally accepted in military service, to another profession, i.e., that of teachers. Let it be enacted that every able-brained citizen shall serve in the Army of Teachers for a certain number of years—details may be worked out on lines parallel to the law of compulsory Military Service, and with much greater justice and ease." This question received the greatest attention in 1937 when a system of national education was evolved by Mahatma Gandhi under which an army of teachers was required to run thousands of Wardha schools. Supporting the idea of conscription, Gandhiji said, "If Mussolini could impress the youth of Italy for the service of his country, why should not we? Our Youth have contributed a lot to the success of the movement for freedom . . . and I call upon them to give freely a year of their lives to the service of the nation. Legislation, if it is necessary in this respect, will not be compulsion, as it could not be passed without the consent of the majority of our representatives." The idea of conscription was further developed by the Scheme of Post-War Educational Development in India proposed by the Central Advisory Board of Education, popularly known as the 'Sargent Scheme' which saw "no prospect of shortening the period without lowering teaching standards, which they would only contemplate as the last resort." Others who carried the idea further included able persons like P. Kodanda Rao, an active member of the Servants of India Society.

This is a brief history of the development of the idea of conscription in education which demonstrates how it has been approved by our national leaders during the last quarter of this century. This feeling became intensified with the rise of Indian nationalism which devoted itself to the removal of mass illiteracy which persisted under the British rule. It is no wonder, therefore, that this question of conscription is given top-priority by our national Government today.

Maulana Azad in his speech remarked that "according to the original plan the education scheme was to be spread over a period of 40 years, but the people of India were not prepared to wait even for half that period." The alternatives therefore are: Forty years or conscription. If the period of universal compulsory education is to be shortened, conscription must be adopted; and the sooner it is done the better. The Government of the people has every right to enforce conscription in the hour of national need. Mahatma Gandhi had clearly expressed his opinion on this issue. The problem of securing teachers should not be a difficult one. 22,00,000 teachers needed under the Sargent Scheme for an adult population of 238,000,000 (pre-partition figure) according to Shri M. S. Sundaram, the then Assistant Educational Adviser to the Government of India, works out at one teacher for every 108 adults. If his calculation is accepted, the country should easily be able to select one person out of every 108 of its adult population for the teaching profession.

In addition to the great advantage of providing facilities for education to millions of men, women and children, conscription has other advantages. Rajaji emphasized the indirect utility of conscription in one's own family. "No matter what schools are available for one's children", said he, "one always finds himself compelled to be a teacher in one's own family to a very great extent, and a general equipment in the science of teaching would be a great advantage and an unwasted asset for any educated father, apart from the question of compulsory education or compulsory service as a teacher." He was right when he said that the possession of the art of educating children and the knowledge of child-upbringing would be an asset to one's own family. Those persons who are engaged in the teaching profession today may have fully realized, as I do, that ignorant homes are a hindrance to the proper education of children. This complaint is equally applicable to the educated parents. Presiding over an educational conference in Karachi, Dr. Zakir Husain ironically observed that he would be glad if the Indian children were orphaned because they did not receive the much needed care from their parents for their normal growth and development. The second great advantage arising from conscription will be regarding the prestige of the teaching profession. Though labelled as the makers of the nation, teachers are little respected, much blamed and meagrely paid. There is a mistaken notion in the country that of all professional men teachers alone ought to be actuated by a sense of missionary spirit, with the result that such a state of affairs has failed to bear adequate results. As they do not command the esteem or regard of their fellow men, most of them are often recruited from among those who have been refused admission to other professions. Conscription will, therefore, go a long way in eliminating the too common disregard of and prejudice against the teaching profession found today in our society. When thousands of young men and women will have to devote a year or two of their lives to this service of the nation, the gulf between the downtrodden class of teachers and the so-called other superior professions will be narrowed. Teachers as a class are, therefore, looking forward to the day when every "able-brained" person in the country will be a teacher first before he becomes a "Burra Saheb".

There might be certain objections to this scheme of conscription. People might say that a legal obligation to serve as teachers ignores fitness and equipment for the work of teaching. But this argument, if sound, is applicable to all conscripts, whether a teacher or a soldier. If one can be expected to be a good soldier irrespective of his interests and aptitudes for the profession, every one can also be expected to be a tolerably good teacher even if he may not have a liking for the teaching profession. But there is a difference between the two. The art of defending the country and of killing others is quite different from the art of fighting against the ignorance of either adults or children. The one is destructive, while the other is constructive. The one requires the spirit to kill, while the other demands the spirit to die. It, therefore, becomes necessary to exempt those persons absolutely unfit for the job from such duties, and to get them absorbed in other useful national services.

The Sargent Scheme did not say anything about the period of service for the conscript teachers. Mahatma

Gandhi once suggested five years and at another time one year. Maulana Azad left this question to be decided by experts who were to be appointed to draw up the scheme of conscription in its entirety. A reasonable term of conscription may be two years taking into consideration the needs of an individual. For those whose eyes are turned to other professions, five years will be too long a period of waiting, while one year is too short a period, because one will have to quit teaching by the time one gets into the spirit of one's work. Connected with the term of conscription is the question of training. A short course of intensive training of two or three months' duration will be necessary. The objection that the expenses incurred on training will be wasted is not sound. When a country is at war and conscription is felt as an unavoidable necessity, the enormous cost of training the defence personnel has to be borne by the State, in full knowledge of the fact that the money is going to be useful only in case the war lasts. If we treat this educational emergency on the same footing as a war emergency, we shall have to adopt emergency measures to raise an army of teachers, to provide short courses of training for them and to demobilize the forces after the war against the ignorance of the masses has been totally won.

The next question for consideration is what should be the basis of conscription. In this connection, it is suggested that a system similar to that in vogue in India for the admission of candidates to C.T. or B.T. courses might be adopted. We would require matriculates and undergraduates for Basic (Primary and Middle) schools and graduates for High Schools. Before they are awarded any certificates or degrees, they should be required to serve as teachers in a recognized school for children or adults for the period of conscription. I strongly recommend that service in school should precede the award of the certificates or degrees and that the quality of the work put in during the term of compulsory service as a teacher should decide the evaluation of the individual's division. They should be made to realize that the work they are doing is a part of their academic achievement. I also suggest that as early as possible, even if such conscription is not imposed on the country, the science of teaching should be recognized as a fundamental branch of knowledge like Mathematics or a language. As Rajaji has observed, "everyone finishing a secondary course, should have a fairly good knowledge of the methods of imparting elementary instruction and every graduate of the University should have a sound knowledge of the principles of teaching, so that he may be a fruit with a seed."

A word now as to the problem of women teachers would not be out of place. By far the most difficult problem is that of securing an adequate supply of women teachers. Conscription will solve this difficulty, but it will at the same time raise a number of other difficulties connected with Indian womanhood. Most educated women in India prefer to lead a married life as soon after completing their studies as possible. Owing to age-long prejudice, no parent or husband, rich or poor, ever expects a daughter or wife to do remunerative work except under the force of circumstances. Government have also to fight against this evil. The only way is to insist by persuasion or legislation that women who are educated at public expense should repay their debt to society by serving as teachers at least for the period of conscription.

This solution of the problem is a long-term one. It will depend on the new schools which have to be brought into existence. Without more teachers we cannot have new schools, and without more schools we cannot have new teachers. The only way to break this vicious circle is to enlist teachers by conscription.

CHAPTER VII

TRAINING TEACHERS FOR A NEW ORDER

Nobody can deny that the training of teachers for our schools will now have to be centred on turning the child's eyes towards a better social order. In other words, it means that the teaching system will have to be examined to see to what extent it will be expressive of the new principles and to what extent there will be change in purpose, content and methods of teaching to enable it to develop and sustain the values of the new society in free India.

We have before us the comprehensive scheme of Post-War Educational Development in India. In a full reconstruction programme, the country will have to provide facilities for educating 5,88,00,000 children. Imagine for a moment a mammoth congregation of nearly six crores of children being taught by about 22 lakhs of teachers. What a major reform and a gigantic force for rebuilding our nation! With such a picture in view we have to ask ourselves what our aims are, what sort of a world it is that we wish to build and whether teachers will produce makers of peace or war-mongers. In all circumstances, the shaping of the probable future of mankind will be in their hands. I am here reminded of what H. G. Wells wrote when the shadow of the last war lay on the world. He asserted emphatically, "The driving force that makes either war or peace is engendered where the young are taught. The teacher . . . is a real maker of history; rulers, statesmen and soldiers do but work out the possibilities of co-operation or conflict the teacher creates. This is no rhetorical flourish, it is a sober fact." His most candid remarks emphasize the bi-polar educator-educand relationship and thereby the function and the duty of a teacher-training institution in the present world. So the training institutions must take a hand in this great enterprise, for I believe with H. G. Wells that the future unity of mankind will depend on the teacher. Will his teaching methods cultivate internationalism in the children, and thus enable them to become the crusaders of a new age?

All this means that the teacher under training will have to be given a real insight into the working of social forces, the play of sympathies and animosities and systems of affection and hatred. In his *Education for a World Adrift*, published in 1943, Sir Richard Livingstone declared: "We have to transform a world with uncertain standards and vague values, with many virtues but no clear philosophy of life, into one which *knows how to refuse evil and choose good*, clear in its aims and therefore in its judgments and action." What I have said in the last few paragraphs has a bearing on post-Independence reconstruction of teacher-training in India for a new order.

How then are we to bring about the change? How are we to train teachers for a new order? How are we to give them the emotional drive they need? I pin my faith more to teaching than to any other educative process, because the teaching of different subjects exerts a major force in the formation of a child's character. The problem of training teachers for a new world, based on contentment, orderly progress and peace, raises seven important issues: (1) the selection of teachers; (2) the choice of teachers for specialization in different subjects; (3) training in religious instruction; (4) the choice of the right type of subject-matter for teaching; (5) the equipment of libraries in teachers' colleges; (6) the preparatory courses in universities; and (7) training in new and effective methods.

No school can permit itself to be indiscriminately propagandist. This directly raises the problem of the selection of suitable candidates likely to make good as teachers in an educational system where indoctrination finds no place. A teacher whose scholarship is confined to some narrow specialized field, is apt to fall an easy victim to propaganda. To such persons the doors of the training college will have to be closed. At any cost, teaching will have to be removed from the control of those who are prone to indoctrinate children. Space forbids the discussion of the influence of the teachers' personality and the rôle of the unconscious on the much more suggestible child. K. G. Saiyidain, Deputy Educational Adviser to the Government of India, has suggested that we should devise a system of maintaining fairly elaborate individual records of all students who pass out of the secondary, or senior basic schools. Such records, if properly maintained, will help to a great extent in eliminating those who are likely to prove misfits. The problem is very serious in India, particularly in these days of international bitterness. Such bitterness in public life has its effect in the classroom. It is a common occurrence that a teacher belonging to a certain sect or group endeavours to indoctrinate children by showing them only what he regards as the bad aspect of the thoughts and efforts of other sects, groups or nations. He gains much pleasure from indulgence in the classroom of his own unconscious wishes which have remained partly or entirely unfulfilled in his public life. Is not such a class of teachers a hindrance in the building of a new society? It is, beyond doubt, bad pedagogy. The elimination of such persons at the time of selection will have to be a major objective. If in the future we are able to raise a class of teachers sufficiently wise, patient and bold to break the shackles of indoctrination, the training colleges will be of no small help in the building of a new order.

Secondly, much care will have to be taken in allowing the pupil-teachers, just recruited to the teaching profession, to choose their special subjects in the training college. The wisdom or otherwise of their selection may even have to be reconsidered while they are under training. There is no danger in the case of physical sciences in which teachers are committed to no dogmas about things, and in which the dogmas, if any, can easily be tested. But with the social sciences the position is different. Teachers have to deal with man, his brain, his motives, his past and present, his thoughts, feelings and actions. So in the training colleges of the future, no teacher with an intolerant attitude should be allowed to offer for specialization any subject in which man is the central figure. The suggestion is the more timely because schools now show a tendency to prefer specialists as teachers.

Thirdly, there is an ever deepening conviction that in any school which seeks to develop the all-round personality of its pupils, religious instruction will be a necessity. People have begun to realize that the world's present ills are due to the divorce between science and religion. I need not enter here into the controversy, but if this principle is recognized, the training colleges will have to provide teachers competent to teach religion. I cannot do better than quote an extract from the statement issued in 1941 by the Archbishops of Canterbury, York and Wales on this subject. They proposed that (1) religious instruction should be entrusted to teachers willing and competent to give it, and that (2) religious knowledge and the imparting of it should be an 'optional subject', not merely an 'additional option', in the course of training for the Teacher's Certificate.

Fourthly, the teachers will have to be specially trained in the choice of the right kind of subject-matter required in the teaching of every subject. The promotion of internationalism must be one of the major objects of teaching and this urge should guide the teacher in his choice. Every subject in the curriculum can play some part in bringing home to the children the contribution which different countries and peoples have made to the progress of the world. Every subject has a cultural and human side which, if continually kept before the children, will help in linking peoples of various communities, religions and races. To build up a cosmopolitan outlook, which will be an immediate necessity of the new world, a sincere teacher will not fail to inspire children with the wealth of culture different groups of humanity have bequeathed to the present stock of world progress and civilization.

Fifthly, the foregoing consideration confronts us with the problem of equipping the libraries. Training colleges are not usually equipped with books on a wide variety of subjects, particularly with books on the history of different subjects, which provide a mine of information useful for cultural purposes. Books should be supplied, teachers should be assigned reading from encyclopaedias, and should be encouraged to study widely as well as deeply. I suggest that extra classes for this purpose should be held regularly.

Sixthly, educationists have begun to realize that there is a necessity for preparatory courses in the universities for students intending to take up teaching as their profession.

We now come to the last problem of teaching methods for developing an emotional foundation for internationalism. Having chosen the right type of factual knowledge needed for the children to form a foundation in later life for a healthy international outlook, one is confronted with the problem of training the teachers in useful and effective methods. It is not uncommon to find in training colleges a few pedagogic maxims on the tongue of every pupil teacher, e. g. 'Herbartian Steps', 'Motivation', 'Correlation', etc. The sixty practice lessons required from every teacher under training become a stereotyped and monotonous affair. Demonstration lessons are given by lecturers at the beginning of the course when the pupil-teacher does not understand even the A.B.C. of teaching. To remedy these evils and to realize the aim I have been emphasizing, the first requisite is that well-planned demonstration lessons, avoiding indoctrination and propaganda but encouraging straight thinking and judgment, and keeping the human side continually before the children, should be arranged. If greater effect is desired, demonstration lessons should be arranged before the beginning of every practice term. The teachers should be told definitely what to observe, how to observe, and what to note. 'Criticism lessons' should follow the demonstrations. Each lesson should be discussed, before it is given, by a group of pupil-teachers interested in that subject, from the point of view not only of technique but also of ascertaining how far the lesson will provide the children with a stimulus to inter-communal, inter-cultural and international friendliness. After the lesson has been conducted, the same group of teachers should critically examine the response and reactions of the children, together with the general effect and technique. The inculcation of an international attitude, based upon a knowledge of interrelations and interactions between one country and another, must also receive greater emphasis in the 'lesson plan.'

All this means that we must recast our methods of teaching and presentation in such a way that every subject of study is coloured by the human point of view. Arts, Sciences and Literature should teach us the unity of mankind and show us that the human spirit has found expression in different forms in different countries. Once teachers under training come to feel this, the problem of international understanding will be easier to solve. Let leaders and statesmen of our country hesitate, but let the teacher-training institutions contribute their share in the building of a new order.

A word of warning is necessary as to how the suggestions I have adumbrated may be effectively brought into practice. To ensure individual attention, quantity will have to be sacrificed to quality. From my own experience of teaching in a Training College I suggest that the number of pupil-teachers for one lecturer should not exceed six if the best results are to be achieved; eight will be a fairly satisfactory number, but ten or more will be too large a number for any efficient work.

CHAPTER VIII

RECREATION FOR TEACHERS

THE plea for fewer hours of work and higher wages has received general recognition in the industrial field as a natural result of the age of power and improved processes. State legislation has imposed restrictions upon the number of hours for which men and women may be required to work. The realization of the potential advantage of reduced hours of work has been reinforced by the recognition of its importance from the standpoint of human values also. People now realize more than ever before that young men and women must employ their leisure in a wholesome and satisfying manner. With the increasing realization of recreation as something of value and dignity, efforts for its promotion have followed as a natural consequence. But this curtailment in the hours of work does not apply to men in some other professions, particularly to teachers. The benefits of this human concession have not percolated to the teaching class which is entrusted with the task of producing worthy citizens of the future. The income of a large number of Indian teachers leaves little or no surplus to admit of any expenditure on recreation. A teacher has to curtail his already small leisure hours by imposing upon himself extra tuition work, in order to eke out his meagre salary.

The question of recreation depends not only on the amount of leisure available to people but also on the nature of its employment. It has been demonstrated how teachers, instead of getting more leisure which the nature of their work demands, have even greater professional preoccupation and economic worry resulting in deterioration of their efficiency. I do not believe that any substantial increase in the salary of teachers is possible either immediately or in the near future without a revolution in the method of distribution of the nation's wealth. The conditions are now painful and disheartening among teachers on the lower rungs of the professional ladder, especially the primary school teachers who constitute the bulk of the teaching population. It was disclosed in the Indian Parliament that in West Bengal and some other States primary school teachers were paid far less than peons and chaprasis in Government offices, their remuneration in many cases dwindling down to Rs. 15 a month. It is sometimes true that even the Governments are not in a position to help much in the matter, in view of the varying local circumstances and financial positions of the States. Uttar Pradesh, for instance, which employs about five million primary school teachers, cannot possibly grant all a scale of salary which will place them above the need of extra remunerative work. It is a colossal task indeed.

Readers may be wondering why I have been enlarging so much on the economic conditions of teachers. The reasons are obvious. I have been emphasizing the close relationship that exists between the economic condition of the people and the type of recreation they can get. The countries of Europe and the United States have provided more opportunities for the recreation of the people because of their greater national wealth. Recreational activities require materials and services which cannot be had without money. It does not mean that in these countries there is an equitable distribution of wealth or equal opportunities for all for recreation. But it is true that the people's lack of means to purchase recreation is in some degree compensated by the public and other community facilities which are open to all.

The unique position of teachers is, therefore, a challenge to our intellect and resourcefulness. We have to realize the urgency of the problem and deal with it on an emergency basis. The teacher's job is an uphill task. He is required to prepare his lessons, teach six periods a day, supervise or organize games and other extra-curricular activities, correct the written work of his pupils, keep in touch with the latest trends in the world of education and, lastly, do extra tuition work after his day's work at school. In brief, he is faced with 'longer hours of work on lower wages'. As a result of this, a large number of teachers find their work deteriorating in quality. They fall into certain defective teaching habits which destroy their chances of improving their position and inhibit the good qualities they need for success in the profession. Teachers as a class may be described in the words of L. P. Jacks as 'damaged humanity...... whose appearance clearly denotes that they are living woeful, inadequate lives, inadequate physically, to begin with, and with all the mental and moral inadequacies that follow from that.'[1]

The health and happiness of teachers is the foundation upon which rests the happiness of the children. If we cannot reduce teachers' hours of work, relieve them of financial worries, provide them with sufficient leisure and give them that status in society which their profession demands, all our efforts to reform society are doomed to failure. The best way to give them joy in their profession is to provide them with opportunities for recreation, 're-creation of something that gets damaged in human beings' under the strain of school life. Some people lay emphasis on discipline among teachers, some on their rôle and work, and some on their freedom, but all these objectives will be automatically achieved if we can increase their happiness. Unless they are happy, they cannot grow to their full stature.

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[1] *Education Through Recreation* by L. P. Jacks, p. 128, University of London Press.

The recreation of teachers is, therefore, a matter of great significance in the interest of the profession. Tired and listless teachers are usually found to age quickly even during their youth, the period of greatest productive leadership when they can make their best contribution to society. Although they cannot be properly called disabled or ill, yet their physical efficiency is lowered and their joy of living is seriously impaired by fatigue, nervous exhaustion, irritability and emotional handicaps.

The transformation of teachers into a joyous community is the chief aim of their recreation. We do not know whether the teachers' overwork and the poor means at their disposal are going to take them, under the existing conditions, to new heights of happiness or into the depth of misery for themselves and for the country. The right solution of the problem to some extent lies in the course that teachers themselves choose to take today. I concede that they are overworked people with little or no leisure. This emphasises all the more the need for greater opportunities of recreation in their lives for their own personal development. If others are not interested in their welfare, let them in their own interest agitate for their recreation without losing time. Such a movement, I am convinced, will lead to a richer and fuller life.

It is not easy for adults to acquire an interest in physical, cultural and educational hobbies, because the things which are undertaken gladly in childhood have to be pursued volitionally by adults until a certain degree of proficiency is achieved.

A word now as to the nature of recreational activities would not be out of place. I do not wish to dwell upon the games and recreational activities so common in schools which give a new meaning to the physical, intellectual, aesthetic and social life of the institution. As the organization of such activities rests on teachers, they can conveniently share their advantages by active participation in them. It is, however, not possible sometimes, because play ceases to be recreational the moment it becomes a part of work imposed from without.

Recreation includes all the beautiful skills, crafts, and hobbies that human beings can practise, even the finest of the fine arts. It is not possible to suggest a long list of such activities, but an effort will be made to indicate the nature of its great scope.

Camping trips, whether in formal or informal groups, should be promoted among teachers. They may be organized occasionally on holidays. G. T. W. Patrick in his book *The Psychology of Recreation* explains that going to the forests, the mountains and the lakes, engaging in hiking, camping, swimming and hunting, are restful largely because these ways of living are racially old, which we can follow naturally without effort. His theory may be inadequate, but his observations are in the main correct. In camping the walls of a classroom recede, dull books disappear, strength is renewed and lost powers are restored. Teachers should in ever increasing numbers seek the open country for ideal relief and relaxation. These trips are peculiarly suited to poor teachers who cannot afford the commercial forms of amusements or join expensive civilian clubs.

The most vital question before the teacher is how to spend the long summer vacation. It should be just the period when a teacher's mind should be free from routine work, and be left free for self-help and original development. These empty days have to be filled in with some kind of recreational occupation. Gandhiji, realizing the huge wastage of leisure among teachers, once suggested that they should devote the whole of their vacation to village service. Social work among the masses was to Gandhiji a recreation. His advice to teachers is worth considering and could be brought into practice. Another suitable agency of recreation which has developed into a tremendous institution in America is the organized summer camp, at present unknown to us in India. An organized summer camp in the summer has many potential values which every individual, from the high-salaried executive to the poorly paid labourer, can seek to achieve. Camping among teachers can be promoted if the State provides easy access to beauty spots and other facilities of lodging, equipment, etc.

The home is a vital place where the teacher can get abounding opportunities for relaxation after the days' hard work. Happy home life is an asset to an individual as it tends to prevent accumulation of fatigue and consequent decay in human beings, both physical and mental. But unfortunately the Indian home is the weakest link in the chain of society. Many teachers who are engaged in enlightening the minds of others keep their homes in prepetual darkness and ignorance. Had it been otherwise, India would have attained a different status today. The agony of the Indian home needs no elucidation here, though it is a fascinating field for exploration. For his own happiness the teacher should give sufficient attention to home life, remove ignorance, autocracy and subjection, and try to brighten his gloomy hours with his family by providing for and participating in recreational programmes.

The monotony and drudgery of school life, the chief cause of a teacher's fatigue, are the product of his own creation, but these can be removed by play-way methods in his teaching work. It is found that teachers do not take any appreciable interest in the opportunities for cultural advancement or recreational benefit that are offered to them. The problem, therefore, is one of providing facilities and programmes which would induce participation in those activities which contribute to the desired objectives of increased joy and happiness. Teachers must be made to feel that the authorities are taking an interest in their welfare and are doing something to provide for them opportunities for recreation.

It is becoming generally recognized that the creation and maintenance of indoor recreational facilities such as fellowship clubs for teachers, is the duty of the school, in order that the whole staff can take advantage of them. Another useful purpose could be served if schools possessed libraries well equipped with books on a variety of modern subjects other than those which are needed daily in connection with the teaching work. Reading a book of one's own choice is one of the highest types of recreation.

A democracy looks primarily to the school to educate people for wise living and for a judicious use of leisure. It looks to the school, again, to provide facilities and opportunities for the recreation of teachers who are deprived of that very joy of life which they are expected to promote in others.

CHAPTER IX

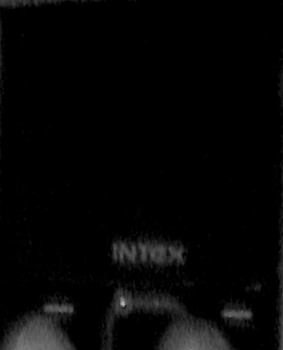
EDUCATION UNDER THE NEW CONSTITUTION

THE democratic principle of equality of educational opportunity was first conceived in India in 1854 when for the first time the old idea that the education imparted to the higher classes of society would filter down to the lower classes was discarded in Wood's Despatch and an emphasis was laid on the elementary education of the masses. Another great event in the educational history of India occurred in 1911 when G. K. Gokhale introduced in the then Central Assembly a Bill which, even though it was defeated, directed the attention of the country to this colossal task. After a quarter of a century when the Congress came into power in eight out of the eleven provinces in 1937, Mahatma Gandhi advocated equality of opportunity in education and adumbrated a seven-year free and compulsory system of education. This ideal has found full expression in the Constitution of the Indian Republic.

But the first question that agitates one's mind is whether equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed in a political democracy where the Constitution is not pledged to any economic order. Our Constitution actually does not contemplate any set economic structure, but it does envisage a social order in which justice, economic and political, is secured to every citizen. It also specifically lays down that the State shall direct its policy towards securing for its citizens the right to adequate means of livelihood and see to it that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth into a few hands. The criticism that inequality of opportunity may result from the absence of social equality may be silenced to some extent by pointing out the fact that necessary elements of growth and elasticity inherent in the Constitution will enable the country to adopt any economic order the people's representatives may choose at any time. But the practice of political democracy, for example, in the U.S.A., has failed to bring the desired result. Writing on this important subject, Shri Shanker Rao Deo remarked: "In spite of these high principles, the incidence of her birth made democracy a handmaid of capitalism ...... which resulted in intense exploitation at home and abroad, concentration of power and production, colonial empires and world wars." So the suspicion of some of our countrymen may be justified to some extent when they look at the new Constitution from this angle of vision which has been fashioned after the model of the West.

The second question arises from granting certain concessions to the minorities. The Constitution in granting freedom to all minorities, whether based on religion or language, allows the establishment of separate systems of educational institutions of their choice. Such institutions, if administered without State aid, may even deny admission to children on grounds of religion, caste or creed. These institutions, which are likely to be run by charging high fees as in England and the U.S.A., will, therefore, tend to promote the segregation of the nation into separate groups. By charging high fees they will also afford greater opportunity for the wealthy groups and continue to maintain historical class divisions. It is true that the number of such institutions, which are in some places a menace to democratic life, will shrink after the withdrawal of the Government grants-in-aid. But a large number of such institutions are bound to exist, as their existence has been permitted by the Constitution as a logical application of the democratic principle of equality of opportunity for all minorities.

Another closely related problem is that of religious instruction. The Hunter Commission, which was formed under the pressure of Christian Missionaries to spread their religion in India, rejected the proposal and recommended the continuance of secular education in Government institutions. The Government of India in 1904 and again in 1913 endorsed the principle of strict religious neutrality. This practice was severely criticised in 1937 when Mahatma Gandhi also preached secularism and eliminated religious instruction from his Wardha schools. The country which is often spoken of as embodying the spiritual East, was stunned at the neglect of religious training in the national system of education, especially as it came from a deeply religious man. But the Mahatma with his foresight looked many years ahead and truly laid the foundations of a secular State. What he felt and thought as regards this problem has been fully recognized and given effect to in the new Constitution. It envisages a secular State system existing side by side with independent institutions imparting religious education. "No religious instruction", says the Constitution, "shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds". It further lays down that the institutions recognized by the State or receiving aid out of State funds, shall not compel any person to take part in any religious instruction or worship that may be imparted or conducted in such institutions unless he or his guardian, if the person is a minor, has given his consent. Thus a religious minority can start an educational institution of its own choice. The institution will be provided with a State grant without any discrimination. The State financial help will mean that the institution shall not deny admission to any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste or language. Religious instruction will be allowed in such institutions without compelling any person to receive it. So the educational institutions of the country will fall into three catagories. The first will be a group of secular institutions wholly maintained out of State funds. There will be another class of independent religious institutions wholly meant for a religion or sect with full religious freedom, closing their doors, if they so desire, to persons of other denominations. The third group will be those institutions which take State financial help and keep their doors open to others. Religious education will be allowed in independent religious institutions which do not also solicit Government recognition. Religious education in the institutions receiving State help will be on a voluntary basis. This religious freedom will be secured to the minorities in full, even up to the extent of compulsion in the institutions wholly financed by voluntary contributions. Even in the institutions partially aided by the State, compulsion can be exercised among the members of the same religion. This will be a unique example of State collaboration providing equality of opportunity to minorities for their growth, yet the State itself retaining its secular outlook. The theory that a secular State is irreligious is thus exploded. Secularism in practice means neutrality, but in spirit it means faith in all the religions, and, therefore, it entitles all persons to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate their religion. This is, therefore, the only possible solution under the circumstances. This arrangement is an improvement upon the constitutions of many countries which forbid the diversion of any public funds to the promotion of religious freedom in schools. In our Constitution the provision is so ably made that a religious institution belonging to a minority and receiving aid out of State funds can impart religious instruction to willing persons, generally the members of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the same religious group. The only genuine objection which may be raised by parents is that they have to bear the double burden of taxation for public schools and of private contributions to separate schools. This freedom will, therefore, be available at a high cost which means, to some extent, a denial of equality of opportunity in education. This will be undemocratic.

The linguistic problem of India which was so complex and controversial has been satisfactorily settled. There were three main issues: (a) The choice of the national language, (b) equality of opportunity for all linguistic groups within the Union, and (c) conservation and equality of opportunity for the growth of the languages of minorities which inhabit a compact territory and have their own culture and historical tradition. The linguistic problem has been satisfactorily solved on a pattern very similar to the Russian model. Hindi in Devanagri script, 'as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India ..... securing its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the form, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India' has been chosen as the official language of the Union for federal purposes. The States have been given the right 'to adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State'. The minorities which have a distinct language, script or culture of its own have been given the right to conserve the same. They have further the right to establish educational institutions of their choice and will be entitled to receive grants-in-aid by the Government of the State.

Hindi will thus be a living and growing language, will be flexible and receptive. It is but natural that education in primary and even secondary stages will be in the regional languages of most areas. But where other language groups exist, provision will have to be made for teaching children in their respective languages. Where schools have been established by minority groups to give children education through the media of such languages, these will be allowed to continue and receive State aid as in other cases. Left to the working of natural forces, particularly the inducement arising from the mere fact that the regional language will be the language of the courts and administration, these groups might soon realize the importance of falling in line with the people amongst whom they have to live and carry on their activities.

The last thing that the Constitution-makers have done in the field of education is to do away with discrimination by the State against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. They have on the other hand laid down under the Directive Principles of State Policy that the State shall promote with special care the educational interests of the weaker sections of the people, particularly of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes who have so far been considered the lowest rungs of the ladder of Indian society and who were the greatest sufferers of the filtration policy during the British rule. The incorporation of such a wise article in the Constitution will be of great help to future legislators in eliminating inequality of educational opportunity between one class of people and another. Such a provision was all the more necessary in the light of the experience of the working of political democracy in some of the progressive countries of the world, like the U.S.A., where in the Southern States legislation permits racial discrimination in education.

Another important provision in the Constitution concerning education is regarding federal intervention in prescribing a compulsory age of education for children of all the States. From the viewpoint of equality of opportunity, this article prescribing that each State shall provide for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years is of unique importance. This will lead to uniformity of compulsory age at least at the upper level in all the States of the Republic. In the U.S.A., in the absence of any Federal legislation, the age limits for compulsion vary from six to eight at the lower end and from fourteen to eighteen at the upper end. It is also good that, in our Constitution, no lower age-limit has been prescribed, but only a suggestion has been made to the States to endeavour to provide for nursery education on the model of the pre-school system of the Soviet Union or the Ecoles Maternelles of France. The provision for making education free and compulsory in a poor country like India, and that within a period of ten years (the shortest period ever visualised in India under any plan), is an attempt that will be recorded in letters of gold in the history of educational development.

The question of the education of women is given a new significance in the Constitution. It bans discrimination on grounds of sex. The right to equality is granted to the women of India along with men as they are also entitled to receive education until the age of fourteen. The Constitution thus definitely lays down the principle of equality of opportunity in regard to the ends of life, but is not so clear on the question of the means, that is to say, education for achieving those ends. It only says that education shall be free and compulsory until the age of fourteen. The question of the education of women gains a special significance in the light of the provisions in the Constitution that women shall be eligible for any employment or office under the State. Such an important provision would remain a dead letter if the educational system did not prepare them equally with men at all levels for various callings. There seems to be general agreement as far as the basic educational needs are concerned, but there is a difference of opinion about the nature of women's education at the secondary and higher levels. The Report of the University Commission presided over by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has appeared at an opportune moment and clarified many of the issues relating to women's education. It states: "General education for interesting and intelligent living and for citizenship in large part can be the same for men and women...women should share with men the life and thought and interests of the times ..... yet it does not follow that in all things men's and women's education should be identical." The Report is in conformity with the ideal which led our Constitution-makers to guarantee to women equality of opportunity in respect of any employment or office under the State. But it remains to be seen how far this provision can be translated into reality. It is good that the Constitution has not ignored the education of women who comprise practically half of the total population.

As far as the administration of education is concerned, the Reforms Act of 1919 decentralized the administration of education in the country and made it a provincial, 'transferred' subject; and the introduction of provincial autonomy under the Government of India Act, 1935, brought education under the full control of the provincial Ministers of Education. The new Constitution has not made any marked improvement upon the Government of India Act, 1935, in this respect. Education, including that given at Universities (excluding the Universities of Aligarh, Banaras and Delhi) still remains a provincial subject. But institutions for scientific and technical education including Union agencies and institutions for professional, vocational and technical training, together with the promotion of special studies of research, are to be controlled by the Central Government. This system of decentralization of education will foster a sense of responsibility and stimulate initiative to experiment in adapting education to local needs and conditions. One can easily understand the merits and demerits of centralization and decentralization, but when they are applied to India, one is put in a difficult position. India is a vast country and the natural resources and the stage of development due to varying geographical and other conditions greatly differ from region to region. State administration of education, therefore, is likely to bring about differences in the standards of education, thus leading to inequality of opportunity. The Union Government can only prescribe and co-ordinate standards in institutions, but it cannot help very much otherwise. The comparative richness or poverty of a State unit is bound to play its rôle in determining the standard and efficiency of education. The following table gives the expenditure on education in 1946-47 incurred by different provinces per 1000 of total number of students of each province:—

No.	Province	Expenditure in Rs. per 1000 students	Approximate deviation from the average.
1.	Bombay	45,526	+14,000
2.	East Punjab *	40,871	+ 9,000
3.	C.P. & Berar	34,291	+ 3,000
4.	Madras	32,411	+ 1,000
5.	United Provinces	32,143	+ 1,000
6.	West Bengal *	30,671	− 1,000
7.	Orissa	27,729	− 4,000
8.	Bihar	22,425	− 9,000
9.	Assam	16,251	−15,000
	Average	31,366	

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* The figures for East Punjab and West Bengal have been calculated on a pro rata basis from information given in *The Indian and Pakistan Year-Book and Who's Who, 1949.*

On the basis of these statistics we may come to certain definite conclusions as regards inequality of educational opportunity arising from the differences in expenditure. The State of Bombay tops the list among the States of the Indian Union, having spent in 1946-47 about thrice the amount spent by Assam and twice the amount spent by Bihar on every 1,000 students in their institutions. Bombay, Madras and Madhya Pradesh (C.P. and Berar), the States of peninsular India, spent quite lavishly on education, while the States of Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and Assam in the north-east of India hardly spent two-thirds of the amounts of the former group. The same pattern of administration of education is evident in the U.S.A. where the inequality between State and State is as great as it is in India. Does such a state of affairs lead to equality of standards or to equality of educational opportunity? Equality of opportunity for growth, which does not mean uniformity of methods and text-books, is surely important from the national point of view in a vast country like India. Although centralization of educational administration which mars local initiative, responsibility and growth is bad, yet some sort of central control ensuring equality of opportunity to the weaker and poorer States, is highly desirable.

The Central Government grants-in-aid of education in the States whose revenues are far from elastic can be appreciably higher than about 3 per cent, as in America. The total expenditure on education in the provinces of India in 1945-46 and 1946-47 was 4,296 and 4,369 lakhs respectively. Taking the figure of 5,000 lakhs as an annual provincial expenditure on education during the last few years, the percentage of central budget on education comes to about 10 per cent of it. As the Central Ministry of Education has many other financial liabilities, its contribution to poorer States cannot be materially higher than it is at present. Hence, as I pointed out earlier, equality of educational opportunity in the different States of the Republic can only be realized on a national basis when a sound central policy of control and co-operation is given effect to.

Another closely related problem arises from the dominating influence of geographical factors on the development of the educational system. India is no doubt a land of villages where 86 per cent of her population lives. But her urban population also amounts to a little less than the whole population of a highly industrialised country like Great Britain. We can, therefore, say that India is a rural country with a comparatively large urban population. In these conditions India was compelled to develop two quite different systems of education, one for the urban and the other for the rural areas. The differences between these two are profound, resulting in great differences of educational opportunity for the city-dweller and the villager. City schools are larger, better equipped with adequate qualified personnel than the rural schools which are small, one-teacher institutions. The institutions of a higher order have a tendency to be located near the urban areas. Poor management and low standard of work in rural schools may best be realized from the recommendation the Central Advisory Board of Education made in their Report on Post-War Educational Development in India on this important subject. The Report says, "Experience suggests that they (Provincial Governments) would be well-advised to resume all educational powers from local bodies, except where these are functioning effectively." If this recommendation is put into operation, it will result in further centralization of educational control into the hands of the State Governments. The Indian educational system is said to be decentralized, but when one considers the vastness of areas administered by the State Governments, one is likely to hold a different opinion. Madras, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh (including the former Banaras, Rampur and Tehri-Garhwal States) cover separately an area of about two-thirds of that of France which is highly centralized. In the States the subject of education is under the control of a Minister assisted by a Director of Public Instruction controlling the inspecting staff of the Government institutions. Secondary education in each State is managed by a Board of Education. The resumption of all educational powers from local bodies as regards elementary education will, therefore, mean greater centralization.

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CHAPTER X

LINGUISTIC EQUALITY IN A NEW DEMOCRACY

THE doctrine of equality of opportunity is the most important principle of democracy. It guarantees to each individual full opportunity for the realization of his capacities to the greatest possible extent. The preamble to the Constitution of India, therefore, proclaims equality of status and of opportunity for all citizens irrespective of their race, caste, creed, religion or language. The declaration of Fundamental Rights secures to all linguistic groups the right to conserve and develop their language, script and culture. Democracy does not contemplate a stage when the linguistic minorities will be absorbed by the rest of the population. All languages are given equal opportunities for development.

In a country like India or Russia where scores of languages are spoken by millions of people, the guarantee of equal right to each linguistic group to develop its own language and culture assumes a special significance. The distribution of population in India is so complex and well-knit that such a guarantee leads to an inevitable conflict. This conflict may be confined to a community when deciding the medium of instruction at the primary stage; or extend to a region or the country as a whole at the secondary or higher stage—always a conflict between the right of the pupil to have his education in his mother-tongue and the interest of the region or the country for administrative purposes and for building up unity. Further difficulties are created by the linguistic pockets (i.e. people of distinct language and culture inhabiting compact areas), by fringe areas and big cities and by the distribution of dispersed linguistic population. There is in general a conflict between two forces, one of a centripetal nature aiming at gradual consolidation and unification as far as possible, leading ultimately to the demand of 'One World, One Language', and the other of a centrifugal nature towards decentralization. The new world as it has emerged today requires an individual to come into contact, directly or indirectly, with the people in their various domains, parochial, community, regional, national and international. The modern structure of society, therefore, lays an obligation on the individual to study more than one language for active participation as a citizen in all the domains noted above. Hence the necessity for the individual to become bilingual or trilingual.

George Fradier, who has been intimately connected with the U.N.E.S.C.O., while writing on the subject of one-world language, remarked: "The wealth of language is a cumbersome heritage. It has caused suspicion among nations and misunderstanding between Governments; it has seriously hindered scientific and cultural exchange." It is really interesting to trace how languages have divided in the course of time into trunks, branches and twigs and how they are at present arresting a common understanding among the nations of the world. He, therefore, suggested an international language, attempts at the evolution of which were made as early as the 17th Century by Descartes. It was not to take the place of other tongues or dialects but was to serve Science, Techniques and Diplomacy. An international language, according to him, designed for scientists and statesmen would also one day help to further the cause of understanding among nations.

In India the national language is to serve the Union legislatures, the Federal administration, the highest tribunals of justice, Philosophy and Science. The regional languages are to serve the State legislatures, the State administration, higher courts of justice and education upto the highest level, delegating the function of education at the secondary and primary stages to the local tongues.

From the above discussion it is evident how closely language is connected with educational problems and why it presents the main focus of all educational reforms in the country. An attempt will be made here to show how far and to what extent the policy of linguistic equality is going to materialize in the new democracy which we are trying to build up.

There have been great debates on several controversial issues during the process of fashioning free India's Constitution. But no issue has stirred such deep passion as that of a national language. The whole drama of Indian history from the pre-Dravidian era (3,500 B.C.) down to the present day was rehearsed. Every sort of modern weapon of warfare–communalism, provincialism, separatism and imperialism–that could possibly be employed in a language battle was used in the Constituent Assembly. Passions were roused, sober and elderly people flung strong language at one another to which frequent references were made by Pandit Nehru in and outside the Assembly and by Dr. Rajendra Prasad on September 12, 1949, when the article on the national language was finally put on the anvil. He appealed to the House "not to let fall a single word or expression which might hurt or cause offence." Why all this? I ask. It was because large sections of people were pinched somewhere, each linguistic group fought for the realization of the principle of equality of opportunity in its own favour. It is natural in the period of transition.

The language battle was fought on two fronts, between the Aryan and Dravidian groups on the one hand and between the forms and styles of the former group on the other. With a view to satisfying as many linguistic groups as possible, four possible solutions were offered. Since the culture of more than 80 per cent. of the people of India is based on Sanskrit, the grandmother of all languages, it was considered highly desirable, specially by the people from the South, that Sanskrit be chosen as the national language. "To make Hindi the national language", said an eminent South Indian, "at least as far as South India is concerned, amounts to a change of foreign masters. Instead of English, Hindi will rule the South." The two other solutions, Hindi or Hindustani, gained sufficient ground for recognition. English was suggested as the fourth solution, but it received little attention.

The opposition from the South and the East somehow slowly weakened. A full-fledged battle, therefore, raged between pro-Hindi and pro-Hindustani groups. An analysis of the battle indicates that the clash of interests resulted in prejudice, prejudice led to distrust and this last, in turn, to a fear complex. The clash of interests arising from the urge to preserve one's own language and culture, psychologically speaking, was natural. But the onset of distrust and fear among the linguistic groups was rather unfortunate. Kaka Kalelkar, in a statement pleading the cause of Hindustani in well-guarded words, said that as Hindu nationalism and Hindu communalism have unfortunately joined hands today, the word 'Hindi' has become suggestive of that spirit, and, therefore, it has lost the confidence of non-Hindu communities. Seth Govind Das on the contrary, pleading the cause of Hindi, said: "The word Hindustani has acquired a peculiar meaning. It has come to connote a language which has an artificial predominance of Persian and Arabic words . . . People of this country, therefore, do not like the word and the meaning it has acquired." Pandit Nehru in his Convocation address at the Osmania University in December, 1948, and in some of his other subsequent speeches in Ahmedabad and Delhi made two important points. Firstly, a language must be a living, growing one, must be flexible and receptive, and must retain all the cultural features it has imbibed through the ages. Secondly, no language can be forced down the throats of unwilling people by a resolution or Act of Parliament. His rôle greatly eased the situation and after great deliberations the Constituent Assembly chose Hindi in the Devanagri script as the national language, as it is spoken by a large number of Indians and has ties of close kinship with all the regional languages of the country. The Rashtra Bhasha, the Common Language, the Federal Language, Bharati or Hindustani, by whatever name it may be called, has been chosen under the name of Hindi to serve "as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India." The Constituent Assembly has also laid down the process of its evolution and growth. But the fear complex is still lingering in the minds of the other linguistic groups, as is evident from the tremors of that historic earthquake which are still felt throughout the country. September 14, 1949 was declared "a Great Day" by Seth Govind Das which according to him ranked in importance second only to the day of freedom. How other linguistic groups took it one could not say. The fear of other linguistic groups, specially of the South, is recognized even by the advocates of Hindi. Pandit R. S. Shukla, Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh, while inaugurating the Hyderabad session of the All-India Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, reminded the promoters of Hindi of their responsibility for enlisting the goodwill and co-operation of the non-Hindi speaking people. They seem to realize the fact that the more obstinately a language is defended, the clearer is the consciousness that it is a matter of preserving one's own linguistic characteristics. If some people have the feeling that Hindi 'with such wealth and resources' is in a position to drive away other cultures to the eastern border of West Bengal or to the south of Cape Comorin, it would become a menace to India's newly-won freedom. The linguistic groups which have had the taste of the 'aggressive attitude' of the Hindi people need constant assurances not only in word but also in deed. All attempts for the promotion of Hindi in different linguistic regions of India must, therefore, be well-advised and well-guarded. This becomes still more important when one considers the huge number of about 3,00,000 new words, nearly three times the present stock of Hindi vocabulary, that have to be coined or borrowed. The shape of Hindi to come, in order to represent the composite culture of India, will, therefore, depend on how these 3,00,000 words will be coined, moulded or modelled. The suspicion will have to be reduced to the minimum by assigning a similar position to the regional language to serve as a medium of education in the universities. Realizing the importance of the problem, the University Education Commission, the Vice-Chancellors' Committee and the All-India University Teachers' Convention, have all recommended regional languages as the media of higher and university education. The other side of the picture should not be ignored. History shows that linguism revived when either another language was thrust on unwilling people or when a high position was assigned to a language in the administration of the region. The position of a regional language is good as far as it enables the people of that language to acquire the highest degree of education and culture. Rivalry between the national language and the regional languages should not be allowed to develop, because it is more poisonous than provincialism or communalism.

The new Constitution lays down that a State may by law adopt any language in use in the State, or Hindi, as the language for all or any of the official purposes of that State. The battle regarding the adoption of a common language may, therefore, be repeated on a regional plane, at least in those States where more languages than one are spoken by millions of people. In the Punjab, for instance, the struggle has resulted in the recognition of two languages. The Hindu leaders, headed by Bakshi Tek Chand, have not accepted the Hindi-Punjabi proposals which are regarded by them as anti-national, being based, according to them, on the two nation theory. The other group, which is in power, and which has faith in the policy of linguistic equality, has recognized both Hindi and Punjabi in the regions of their predominance. The medium of education up to the matriculation standard, according to the plan, will be in the two regional languages. The study of Hindi or Punjabi in the other region will be compulsory from the first class of the primary department. Provision has also been made for the linguistic minorities in both the regions to have their education in their respective mother-tongues (to be declared by the child's parents) at the primary stage, provided there are at least 10 such pupils in a class, or 40 such pupils in the whole school; and at the secondary stage, if one-third of the total number of pupils ask for instruction in their language. The pupils of these two linguistic groups who are not able to build up the required strength as laid down in the proposals will, of course, not have their education through their mother-tongue. These proposals do not apply to those pupils whose mother-tongue is neither Hindi nor Punjabi, and suitable arrangements will have to be made for their education if a sufficient number of such pupils is available at one place. The proposals have been described here in detail in order to show how in a democratic country the application of the principle of equality of opportunity for all linguistic groups takes such a complex shape. There is no other way out. There will be greater difficulties in those States where there are more than two regional languages spoken by millions of people. High-pitched battles may rage in Hyderabad until the State is broken up into its component parts and merged with the three adjoining States. The redistribution of a country into linguistic provinces or states may help partially to cure some of these evils, but it cannot be a complete remedy. The net of the distribution of population in India, on account of racial, geographical, political, economic and commercial factors, is so complex that no region, even after the redistribution of States on a linguistic basis, can escape the responsibility of providing due opportunities for growth and progress to all the linguistic groups and linguistic minorities.

A question which naturally occurs to one's mind is what shall be the criterion of finding whether Hindi has come up to the mark so as to represent the composite culture or the common language of India. What shall be the starting point or the goal? The expression 'common language' presupposes a lowering of the standard of the language in relation to certain areas and vice versa. If Hindi is shaped to suit the Hindi-speaking areas, it will mean a language of a very high standard to the non-Hindi speaking areas, specially the South. This will subject the people of the South to a perpetual handicap in regard to their share in the progress of the country, specially in the Union Services. They have taken a leading rôle in the past in the administration of the country and they are likely to be deprived of that status. As the medium of instruction in the universities will be the regional language, a candidate educated in Hindi from his early infancy to the highest stage will on no account be on a par with a candidate coming from the South educated in his regional language. The latter cannot acquire as much proficiency in Hindi as the former. The period of 15 years as laid down in the Constitution or even more will not sufficiently help in levelling down such differences. A real competition is possible only on common ground when one and the same language is the medium of instruction in all the universities. Hindi should, therefore, occupy an important place at the secondary and higher stages of education in non-Hindi speaking areas.

If the standard of Hindi is lowered in order to suit the non-Hindi-speaking areas, many difficulties may appear to be solved, but such a proposition will not be acceptable to the Hindi-speaking areas which would like to exercise their right to preserve their own standard. It is also difficult to break Hindi into two water-tight compartments and to maintain two different forms, one as a language of culture and the other as a language of communication. One and the same person cannot maintain these two styles. A third form of Hindi as a language of Science and Philosophy is certainly possible.

Another problem which has to be tackled arises from the privileged position assigned to one linguistic group. A citizen, for example, of Uttar Pradesh will have to study only one language, Hindi, his mother-tongue, which is both the regional language and the national language, while a citizen of Madras will have to study an additional language. The position of linguistic minorities will be still more difficult. A Muslim in Hyderabad or a Sindhi in Bombay will have to study three languages, his mother-tongue, the regional language and the national language, provided no further demands are made on him to study other regional languages of the State as in the Punjab. Such differences are likely to cause difficulties for the pupil and bitterness among the linguistic groups. But these differences may be minimised by requiring the privileged groups like the people of Uttar Pradesh to study one more modern Indian language as an additional subject, preferably from the South Indian group.

The problem of increasing demands on the pupil entailed in the study of more than one language should be tackled psychologically. He will be required to know the regional language, the national language, and possibly Sanskrit or Persian (which was regarded in the past by some as an important content of the school curriculum) and English as recommended by the University Commission at the higher and university stage. To overburden the curricula with languages will naturally restrict the scope of real knowledge that the pupils are capable of acquiring.

There are numerous examples in history of the extinction of a language and the gradual extension of another. If a language, superior in style and content with a considerable number of speakers, occupies a more privileged position than an inferior speech, the former is likely to impose itself upon the other, leading to the latter's gradual extinction. Such tendencies must be checked.

The educational and administrative policy of the States should be so shaped that the linguistic minority groups are not compelled by circumstances to ignore or leave their language, particularly by the inducement arising from the mere fact that the regional language will be the language of courts and administration.

The principle of equality of all linguistic groups should be realized to the maximum degree. Russia has, it is said, gone so far as to appoint a special Commission to study the languages of small and dispersed tribes (which had no alphabet or culture), to create an alphabet and a grammar and to prepare text-books for them. In India such opportunities should be given to the greatest possible extent. The new Contsitution has laid down that any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script and culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same. They have also been given the right to develop their language and an assurance against discrimination. But only time will show how these aspirations will be realized in actual practice.

A linguistic minority has been allowed under the Constitution to establish and to administer an educational institution of its choice. Although this right, together with the right to receive help out of State funds without discrimination, has been granted, no such occasion should possibly be allowed to arise which may mean in practice a double burden on parents. They should not have first to pay taxes and then to contribute money for the upkeep of individual schools. It is the duty of the State to impart education to its children through the medium of that language and script which belong to them, at least up to the Matriculation standard.

The linguistic groups which inhabit a compact territory within a State and have their own culture and historical traditions, should have the opportunity to build up their educational institutions, subject to the general educational set-up, at the higher and university levels also with their language and script as the medium of instruction.

This will become more important in view of the fact that the regional language of the State in question will replace English in such higher institutions. The building up of such a system is permissible under the new Constitution with partial help out of State funds, but in actual practice it may not come to fruit without proper encouragement and help from the State.

It is an agreed principle that the regional languages will occupy the same position in the States as the national language in the Union. With due regard to the regional languages and their development, an effort should be made to see that linguism does not destroy the unity of the nation. This also applies to linguistic groups other than the regional language groups, failing which communalism may ultimately result.

The problem arising from the application of the principle of equality of opportunity to all the regional languages to serve the universities and High Courts will have to be so tackled that speedy administration of justice is not hampered and the flow from one region to another of high scientific, technical and philosophical knowledge is not checked. This problem is very complex and may require translations of every nature from one language into another. Linguistic equality presupposes such difficulties, and translations at the cost of the public exchequer are unavoidable.

The wounds inflicted in the language battle should be gradually healed and an earnest endeavour should be made through the policy of linguistic equality and tolerance to eliminate from among the linguistic groups the feelings of prejudice, discontent, distrust, despair and fear which have unfortunately developed or which may still be holding the field. It is not a question of appeasement or of lowering the prestige of one's own linguistic group, but it is a question of far reaching psychological importance which may affect the whole life of the country. It is by virtue of its toleration that a free society can justly claim to be the first and only true society established by man.

CHAPTER XI

THE QUALITY AND EXPANSION OF EDUCATION

THE Plan of Post-War Educational Development for India formulated by the Central Advisory Board of Education envisaged universal compulsory education to be spread over a period of forty years. It received wide recognition in the country and opened the eyes of the people to the colossal task ahead in regard to mass education. The dawn of freedom in the country brought forth a new realization upon the people and they were not prepared to wait for such a long period. In order to meet this popular demand for a more rapid expansion of education, State Governments launched big schemes to be accomplished within a period of ten years. A few of the States like Uttar Pradesh visualized universal, free and compulsory primary education to be achieved within a shorter period of five years. In this State the first batch of 2,200 schools was opened in July, 1947, immediately before the Day of Independence. Those who have any experience of educational organization can easily imagine the amount of labour, thought and planning that must have preceded the launching of the scheme. It was for the first time in the history of education in India that an experiment of this magnitude was undertaken. The State had to train 2,200 teachers by July, 1947, about 7,000 teachers by July, 1948, and about 11,000 teachers by July, 1949, to man the increasing number of schools proposed to be started every year. In order to meet these demands a number of long-range measures were adopted. The number of normal schools was increased, the two-year teacher-training courses were reduced to one year of intensive training, Mobile Training Squads were organised, pedagogy was introduced as one of the optional subjects in the Intermediate classes, and those who wanted to take up the teaching profession were given in addition three months' training in practical work to be qualified as trained teachers. A similar progress in secondary education was achieved during the course of three years, the number of secondary schools having being trebled in 1949. The Minister for Education, Uttar Pradesh, while asking the State Assembly for a grant for education for the year 1950-51 revealed to the house that the number of Government Primary Schools which was only 13 in 1946, now stood at 11,127 in 1949 with a corresponding rise in the enrolment of children from 1,454 to 7,65,640. The expansion of education in Uttar Pradesh has been described here in greater detail in order to show how the problem of education stands today from the viewpoint both of quantitative expansion and of qualitative achievement. Progress along similar lines has been made in other States with certain degrees of variation in keeping with local conditions.

The quality-quantity controversy assumes a special significance in education as it concerns the human potential which has to be educated for the efficient functioning of a democracy. There is no doubt that the primary requisite of any system of public education for democracy is that it should provide for all its members, and not for a few only, at least such education as may be necessary to make them reasonably good citizens. Opinions differ when the balance between quality and quantity is disturbed and quality, the end in education, is unreasonably sacrificed to the expansion of education. The expansion schemes were launched by the States on the presumption that, under the circumstances, the quality of education was to be subordinated to the quantity. The Ministers of Education repeatedly stated that in order to work for a swift removal of illiteracy from the masses, they had planned to ignore quality for the time being until the whole country had achieved cent per cent literacy.

The State which is charged with the responsibility of providing educational opportunities to all its citizens between the age of 7 and 14 years, cannot sustain for a long period such large-scale expansion schemes based on weak foundations. The enthusiastic Minister of Education of Uttar Pradesh, who had repeatedly spoken of expansion of educational facilities at the primary and secondary school stages, without proper maintenance of quality or without effecting a corresponding rise in the standard of education, has been, ultimately, forced to accept the opinion that on no account is the lowering of the standards desirable or to be aimed at. While presenting the budget in the State Assembly for the year 1950-51, he confessed the failure on the part of his Department to maintain a satisfactory quality of education. "This rapid growth," the Minister said, "has naturally led to difficulties about equipment, furniture, apparatus and buildings. Many of the new schools are situated in rural areas and so it has become easy for boys in villages to get secondary education. But it must be confessed that some of the new schools are hardly equipped, in any sense, for the work they are undertaking. It is to be hoped that the pace of starting new schools will now be slowed down and we shall be able to devote more attention to quality."

The future of our nation depends on the quality of its members, both as private individuals and as citizens, and their quality depends as much on the quality of their teachers as on other factors. During recent years the country has seen a great deterioration at all levels of the educational system, that is to say, in the standard of academic achievement, character and discipline among students which alone can enable educated people to solve the great problems that face the country. Besides political reasons, the main factors responsible for such deterioration and indiscipline among the student community are the migration of experienced teachers from the teaching profession to other lucrative careers, the conversion of lower schools and colleges into institutions of higher standards without a corresponding improvement in their equipment or staff and the coming of thousands of inexperienced young men into the teaching profession to man the ever-increasing number of schools springing up in all parts of the country without receiving a comprehensive training in the theory and practice of education. The teacher-training expansion schemes for primary and secondary education launched by several States have already been described. Some of the States have gone so far as to allow Degree Colleges and Intermediate Colleges to add separate classes for the training of graduates and undergraduate teachers respectively. Rules framed after years of experience have been relaxed in quick succession by the State Governments and the universities to meet the ever-increasing demand for new teachers. There can be no two opinions on the question of the relaxation of some rigid rules that hinder the training of a large number of teachers to staff thousands of new schools which must be opened in a vast country like India if the liquidation of illiteracy is to be achieved in a short time. But it is a question worth considering whether at the time of even such an emergency the training of teachers should be placed in immature hands or in the hands of those persons who are both doing school teaching work and also engaged in educating the teachers. Is it worth while to select any graduate with a degree in education for the difficult task of educating teachers, who are to make or mar the future of our nation?

The training of teachers as a profession in its entirety requires special aptitudes and leanings. The modern conception of teacher-training has made it necessary for training institutions to be staffed with persons who combine advanced scholarship in a professed subject with experience of and interest in the teaching of that subject. A report of the Departmental Committee for the Training of Teachers of the Board of Education gives the necessary qualifications of the staffs of teachers' colleges in the following words: "The work (of a lecturer in a Training College) requires a rare combination of difficult elements—high academic attainments, skill in teaching .... and a real interest and belief in school work. It needs, too, a temperament and character which appeals to students and brings out their best, both in their studies and in their corporate and social life. Such people are never likely to be common."

Thus we are led to the conclusion that on no account is the lowering of the standard of teacher-training permissible either by assigning this important task to persons with little experience or to individuals engaged in other types of teaching work. The best possible method that could be worked out under such pressing circumstances without loss of efficiency would be to start a new type of institution with elaborate courses for the training of the 'teachers of teachers'. As a makeshift arrangement, they may also be required to undergo intensive training as apprentices in full-fledged teachers' colleges. It is a strong conviction gradually forced upon me that the ability to teach school children and the ability to teach adult teachers are not identical. The training of the 'teacher of teachers', therefore, becomes all the more necessary in view of the number of teacher-training institutions needed today and of the quality of education of an independent country which must go on extending its frontiers of educational opportunity for its members. The social structure of many countries has considerably changed as a result of the last World War. New aims of education have emerged, and unless a new type of teacher arises, these aims will not be realized. For these reasons, the standard of the new teacher has to be raised and he has to be well trained for his vocation in life.

Another great factor that has been responsible for the lowering of the quality of education is inadequacy of the material equipment of the school. In the enthusiasm for multiplying the number of new schools every year, with a view to ultimately 'saturating' the district and making it ready for the introduction of compulsory primary education, sufficient attention has not been paid to equipping schools with even the barest necessities of accommodation, books, furniture and teaching aids. This was unavoidable to some extent in a country with poor resources like India, although the sums allotted to education in each State had gone up considerably in recent years. But to have given greater attention exclusively to the promotion of educational opportunity at the cost of the quality of education imparted to children was only to court disaster. Even in the midst of an administrative crisis, the State cannot be absolved from the responsibility of making suitable provision in each school. Such basic inadequacies of educational institutions can under no circumstances be allowed to continue even for a day, as they exercise a tremendous influence on the environment of the institution, the teaching methods and the attitudes of the teacher and the taught. To expect an ill-equipped school to build up a suitable environment conducive to successful education and healthful activities is to demand from teachers the impossible. We accused the British rulers for the alien system of education that they forced upon us, resulting in great maladjustments in the physical, social and economic life of the country's educated youth. But there appears today a similar tendency in every part of the country to ignore the content and quality of education arising from the habit of quantitative thinking which has entered into educational discussion and now pervades it.

The ultimate tests of an educational system are what goes on between the educator and the educand, and what sort of youth emerge from the system. The quality-quantity controversy in education assumes a special significance in a period of emergency when plans are afoot to wage war against illiteracy on an unprecedented scale. The quantitative problems of education are political and administrative, while those of quality are educational. As the former are primarily the concern of the administrators, the teachers have a natural interest in and a direct responsibility for the latter. The battle between quality and quantity is, therefore, a struggle between educational administrators and teachers. Members of both the camps ought to do their level best together to arrive at a workable solution for the fulfilment of the common objectives, each camp helping the other as much as possible by a thorough understanding of their mutual difficulties. Much could be done by way of improving the quality of education if a sympathetic understanding between the two was forthcoming. It may be confessed that the teachers as a class have not responded to the nation's call as much as men at helm of affairs have done after the declaration of independence. Teachers should now rise above the common level of degeneration which has set in in the country in the wake of freedom and contribute their effective share even under the existing hard conditions to the raising of the quality of education which is the most important instrument for rebuilding the nation.

CHAPTER XII

EDUCATION THROUGH THE RADIO

We must explore and harness every conceivable instrument of education, whether in the hands of Governments or of the public, for accelerating the struggle for the removal of ignorance from the country. The radio is one such instrument, but the question is whether the radio in India has done as much as it could possibly do in the realms of education.

The radio set in India is still either an amusement-box or a medium of news and information. Few opportunities are offered to listeners with a scholastic bent of mind, the habitual arm-chair globe-trotters, for broadening the horizon of their academic knowledge. The mass of 'winged' words during the eleven-hour-a-day utterances from the A. I. R. is comprised of occasional talks, reviews, discussions, short stories, etc. Even such items, consuming about 40 per cent of the total broadcasting time of each station in India, do not satisfy the urges of a modern educated youth. No mention has been made here of the daily broadcast of popular film songs, full of pathos and frustration in love, a special feature of the A. I. R., which pollute the young mind. The lack of interest on the part of the Ministry of Broadcasting in harnessing the potentialities of the radio for general educational purposes and straightforward teaching can best be demonstrated by the attitude it has been showing towards this urgent national need. They seem to remain satisfied if the radio fulfils their purpose of entertainment, recreation, news and propaganda. The educational broadcasts radiated only from Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Tiruchirapalli are also more or less entertainment programmes specially adapted for children.

Occasionally such programmes certainly provide examples of good speech, new inventions, historical dramas and wealth of current material. The radio is full of promise for the future of our education, but much of the promise yet remains to be realized.

There have been three stages in the development of the radio in India. Before the last World War, the possession of a radio set was looked upon as a luxury and the privilege of a few. People looked with curiosity and wonder at the instrument which adorned the corner of a rich man's room round which gathered his kith and kin in the buzz of interest to hear the 'winged' words bubbling through the mysterious box.

The number of receiving sets imported into India rose from 26,925 in 1937 to 1,07,111 in 1947. Thus, the post-war years, the second stage in the development, saw a definite change in the outlook of the people when the Indian market was flooded with cheap sets. The number of licensees is reported to have increased in the country from 64,480 in 1938 to 2,81,998 in November, 1948, a rapid increase of 350 per cent. The set became popular in cafes, messes, restaurants, clubs and other public places, besides occupying a more dignified place in homes.

The third important stage in the development of the radio came with the dawn of freedom. Government, having realized fully its important rôle in the development of the nation, started ten new 'pilot' broadcasting stations in quick succession.

These stages of development were not peculiar to India alone. The whole world saw a similar progress. There are, it is said, now 800 stations operating on short wavelengths compared to about 250 in 1938—a three-fold increase in number in a short period of about twelve years. These figures clearly demonstrate the remarkable interest the world has taken in harnessing the potentialities of the radio, although primarily as a weapon of propaganda, entertainment and recreation. The radio has, no doubt, rendered useful service as an agency of informal education. As its rôle always remained informal, the programmes in regard to this field reflected lack of insight and thorough planning.

It is surprising that the radio has not so far entered into the classroom on a large scale to compete with the teacher. Such a replacement, if it could possibly happen even to the least possible extent, would have been welcome at this moment when the implementation of large-scale mass education schemes in the country has been greatly slowed down owing to want of funds and teachers. The introduction of the radio into the classroom could have also reduced the cost of education which is an item of paramount importance in the Union or State budgets. At least the knotty problem of unemployment, which naturally crops up with the introduction of machinery as a labour-saving device, would not have arisen here as in other departments of human occupation. Mechanization is an evil when there are too many hands for the work to be accomplished. But it is always good otherwise. The question of the effectiveness of the radio as compared with the face-to-face communication of thoughts by the teacher, need not be discussed here for obvious reasons. There is, of course, no parallel between the two.

Formal education *exclusively* through the radio cannot satisfy the school needs for many psychological and educational reasons. Its application will certainly be an asset to classroom teaching because it is only intended to supplement, and not to replace, the teacher, although even some of the countries of the West with facilities of television have not derived full benefit from it. The radio has rarely been used as an instrument of straightforward teaching on a large scale. It is said that as early as the twenties, language classes were broadcast regularly by the B. B. C., but for some inexplicable reason this feature of regular coaching was abandoned.

It is highly satisfying to note that the authorities of the A. I. R. have also begun to focus their attention on this. In a press note issued about two years ago it was reported that in pursuance of the Constituent Assembly's decision to adopt Hindi as the national language, the A. I. R. would shortly introduce a three-months course of lessons in Hindi, as a part of its regular programmes. The report further stated that 'after a beginning has been made with this course, the A. I. R.[1] intends to introduce a separate, more broad-based schedule for school and university students who have the benefit of the teacher providing the necessary visual projection.'

This new feature of using the radio as an instrument of formal instruction based on definite courses, will be welcome in every educational quarter. Who would not look forward to the day when a Radhakrishnan or a Raman would broadcast a series of lectures on his own subject, based on definite courses, to thousands of students scattered over a great expanse of the country? The venture would go a step forward if the lecture broadcasts were planned on courses prescribed by the universities for the various examinations.

The poor standard of teaching in colleges which is attributed to inefficient staff as compared to university teaching departments may be supplemented by such broadcast lectures by eminent professors from stations serving those areas. Such regular programmes are also likely to prove a boon to a large number of candidates who appear privately at various university examinations.

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[1] A.I.R., Bombay, has already implemented this suggestion and has been conducting Hindi lessons through the mediums of Gujarati and Marathi.

The radio can, therefore, provide great opportunities to educational institutions especially at the collegiate and university level for raising the standard and efficiency of teaching and for expanding educational facilities. Why should we not visualize the establishment of a Radio University at some centre where both broadcasting and university teaching facilities are easily available today? Under such a plan, a professor can lecture to hundreds of students. In the case of an affiliating type of university, teaching may be organised on an inter-collegiate basis. If the enrolled listener, who is eligible to appear at an examination, gets a copy of the lecture programmes at least a fortnight in advance together with synopses of the material to be presented, he can follow the lectures with great ease and intelligence and can also take down notes.

The plan may also include the correction of exercises and even the conduct of examinations through written New-Type Tests which one can correct for oneself when the answers are read out. Examinations through New-Type Tests, which are being given an ever-increasing recognition in educational institutions, may be held under authorised invigilation and the candidates who take such examinations in groups (the group is suggested to minimise expenditure) and are declared to have passed the examinations may be awarded degrees by the University. The examinations may also be conducted under 'set' conditions through the current system of paper-setting, examination and marking.

I realize that it may not be possible for the existing broadcasting stations to make available the already-too-occupied short-wave frequencies or to provide new ones on account of congestion or non-availability of frequencies. Surely it is by no means impossible for the A.I.R. to erect low-power stations at university centres to be used exclusively for educational broadcasts. The difficulty would cease to exist if the Government of India were willing to forego their monopoly over broadcasting. In a free democratic country like India, where freedom of speech has been guaranteed under the new Constitution, such a relaxation of control should not be difficult. In the U.S.A. and the U.K., broadcasting is not a government monopoly. In India, too, the first broadcasting services between July, 1927, and February, 1930, were established by an Indian Broadcasting Company upon lines similar to those of the British Broadcasting Corporation. The reason for the change-over from an Indian Company to Government control and monopoly in 1930 was not a political but a financial one. The Government of India should not, therefore, hesitate now to grant licences to bonafide universities of free India to instal their own low-power fixed stations for educational broadcasting. Many universities, I am sure, would welcome this gesture.

The A.I.R. itself is intending to take a lead by introducing 'a more broad-based educational programme for school and university students'. The Ministry of Broadcasting should take another bold step and constitute a Central Advisory Board of Radio Education on the lines of the Federal Radio Education Committee, United States Office of Education (although the scope of the latter is limited), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The Board should consist of eminent technical experts and educationists to enquire into and report on the prospects of radio education at different levels of our educational system including the huge field of social education, and to recommend a constructive policy in relation to the problems and needs of the country.

CHAPTER XIII

NEW LIGHT FROM SEVAGRAM

The problems of the world today in their community, provincial, national and international aspects have become so complex and difficult that they constitute a most powerful challenge to mankind. The world has seen two devastating wars within a generation, each fought with the object of ending wars but successful only in accumulating more intense feelings of despair, hate and fear. The tragedy is that mankind does not profit by experience and continues to go the same way that has previously led to disaster.

Even to the nations that believe in force as a means of establishing peace, the wars have certainly brought a realization that for the survival of humanity the world must build up a more co-operative and serviceable civilization. They seem to have begun to realize that with the present race for producing weapons of mass destruction, the world will forfeit all the material, social and cultural wealth it has accumulated through centuries of hard work. Nations hardly differ in their chief objectives, but their methods of achieving those noble ends profoundly differ. Leaders and statesmen have not, it seems, realized fully the intimate connection between the end they aim at and the means adopted to attain it. To resort to war for achieving peace is 'to wash mud with mud',—a method which, instead of removing filth, adds to it. It is astonishing that the first atom bomb should have been used at Hiroshima, killing thousands of innocent men, women and children, ostensibly for a speedy termination of the war. Dr. Arthur H. Compton, Chancellor of Washington University and one of the senior members of the American Committee of Scientists charged with the production of the atom bomb, disclosed at Poona the circumstances under which the bomb was used. He said that once the bomb was ready, the main consideration that led to the "fateful" decision was the anxiety to bring the war to a speedy end and thus save the lives of millions of American and Japanese soldiers. The darkness enveloping the world today is the consequence of man's foolish endeavours to make the world 'happier'. It is astonishing that he still aspires to use science for the destruction of humanity by attempting to produce more powerful atom bombs, hydrogen bombs and super-hydrogen bombs.

The common man is passionately eager for progress and constantly tries to evolve a method that could take him from primitive barbarism to a more happy and co-operative civilization. The futility of force, particularly the double-edged weapons that man has invented for his own destruction, has been proved beyond any doubt. The United Nations Organization, the world in miniature which took shape as a consequence of the two great wars, has achieved little because the delegates of member-nations, with minds clouded by passion and bigoted nationalism, forget its objectives and indulge in political and power tactics. The use of instruments that are more effective for bringing goodwill and peace have been advocated from time to time during the post-war years of hard thinking and planning. Some thinkers see a ray of hope only in the change of the individual through sound religious education, or in the evolution of a basic world religion. Rationalists have faith in propagating rationalism as best calculated to induce a reasonable attitude in the people. Esperanto enthusiasts plan to evolve a one-world-language to serve science, philosophy and diplomacy and to foster a better understanding among nations. The building up of nationalism is regarded by many as the only feasible method, while secularism and world-mindedness are preached by others. The educator's approach to such problems will naturally be from the standpoint of pedagogy.

It is surprising that, although man has solved many of the riddles of the universe and has conquered many forces of nature, he has failed so far to explore his own inward energies. As a matter of fact, he has given little thought to such forces as are working upon the human mind today, giving birth to prejudice, hate, intolerance, despair and fear in every walk of life from the parochial to the international field. Although a great number of people devote their lives to the study of the hidden causes of such natural catastrophies as earthquakes, no determined effort has ever been made to study the hidden causes of the man-made earthquakes which shook the earth twice within a generation and the tremors of which are still felt. Such human phenomena should also be a subject for research and thought.

A genuine effort, probably the first of its kind in the world's history, was made when about 100 pacifists representing 35 countries met to find a way of peace in the world at Sevagram, the place where Gandhiji had experimented on his principles of truth and non-violence. The Rev. Michael Scott, in the course of his address to the open session of the Conference, said that many U.N. delegates along with millions of other people were looking to that Conference in the hope that a new force might emerge there in search for a new spirit of peace.

The basic causes of war, as analysed by Pandit Nehru in his address at the Columbia University during his recent visit to the U.S.A., are political subjection and racial or economic inequalities. There will be general agreement as far as these basic causes are concerned, but there are bound to be differences of opinion when one considers the methods for the removal of these evils. People may also be under the impression that the mere elimination of these evils will bring about a happy world. But even with the levelling down of such differences, nations cannot avoid occasional clashes of interests arising from commercial and economic relationships that have become necessary in the new world. Hence, equalities alone will do no substantial good, although they will minimise the chances of frequent world conflicts and disasters. To get a deeper insight into the problem, it is worth while to elucidate the root causes that impel nations to resort to war which may last for years together. It is wrong to assume that the urges to aggression in all the individuals of a nation at any moment fuse together and cause war to break out. It is, on the contrary, the governments, who control the rudders of their nations, that make wars. Once war is declared, and sometimes even before such declaration, those in power exploit nationalism and national sentiments and are thus able to raise a huge army of soldiers and supporters to fight for or to support their policies. They play upon the ignorance and credulity of ordinary citizens who readily consent to their own slaughter. History shows that soldiers in armies have sometimes revolted and refused to fight for a wrong cause on realizing the falsity of the sentiment built up by warmongers. Although such examples are not many, yet they reveal the true nature of the problem under consideration.

The problem, therefore, of a change-over from the science of war to the science of peace must be tackled psychologically. The change-over from the cult of the bomb to the cult of non-violence will not be achieved through the United Nations or by any other method which only prevents the onset rather than cures the human disease. Dr. Rajendra Prasad in his broadcast message from Sevagram just before the resumption of the session of the

World Pacifists' Conference, and again in his address to its open session, analysed the basic causes of the present world bitterness and appealed to the world to concentrate on the individual, which alone can lay the true foundation of lasting peace. He said: "We have to touch the individual, to reform him, and to make him really an instrument of peace so that he may influence other individuals around him and his Government." He also indicated the lines of attack, how with the simplification and reorientation of an individual's life, the exploitation of man by man could be ended. Realizing that education alone could reform the individual and synthesise the spiritual and the material values, the delegates to the Conference formed a Commission on Basic Education and Social Order which reported that, as the vital principle of Mahatma Gandhi's basic education was the development of personality through useful and co-operative work, its acceptance and implementation would remove the major tensions which led to war. The meeting, as might be expected, did not immediately achieve any tangible results. But it focussed the attention of a grieving world on the fact that permanent peace would not emerge from the laboratories where atom bombs are manufactured, but rather from the schools where human energy can be directed into useful channels. The Conference believed that the hope for peace depended not upon the deliberations at Lake Success (in an atmosphere of competition and materialism) but upon such world congregations as the one which met at Sevagram (in an atmosphere of co-operation and spirituality), where Gandhiji practised his great principles of truth and non-violence and moulded the attitudes of millions of people in the cause of a bloodless revolution.

This new flame which made its way from Sevagram will, I hope, set on fire the hearts of teachers who can help the world turn from the path of destruction to the road leading to harmony among free men and free peoples. If the individual is tackled, his personality developed, an intelligent understanding of what is going on in the world built up, and a critical awareness awakened, he will not then be a victim of exploitation by vested interests or by a handful of government administrators. An intelligent, critical and sympathetic understanding of world problems will enable him to like other people well enough to avoid fighting them. The education that we are receiving today has miserably failed to open the eyes of our educated youth who fall easy victims to propaganda, bigoted nationalism, narrowmindedness and false values. The unrealistic approach in our education makes the so-called educated person so intolerant that he resorts to violence for settling disputes.

Hence, the change-over from a war basis to a peace basis, from the United Nations to a World Federation or a World Government, from hatred to love, from fear to confidence, from right to duty, from exploitation to service, and from competition to co-operation, can be effected only through the reformation of the individual through a reorientated system of education, both formal and informal. Disgusted with destructive trends, the world will look up to the new light that emerged from Sevagram in the hope that it may in the course of time enkindle the hearts of millions.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FRONTIERS OF SOCIAL EDUCATION

ADULT education drives in India have suffered much in the past on account of many inadequacies in our effort. The short-lived enthusiasm of adult education workers has been the major factor responsible for the collapse of mass education programmes. People charged with the responsibility of approaching the masses have not attacked the problem with the professional skill of a trained social worker, with a sufficient grounding in the psychology of the masses or with adequate knowledge of educating the adult on scientific lines. On the other hand, the suspicion and fear of the masses who have been constantly the victims of exploitation by vested interests have always put great obstacles in the path of progress. Besides these dissipating forces, there has also been a wide gulf between the content of adult education and the immediate and environmental needs of the adults. Other factors, though of a secondary importance, have also been responsible for failure in this field of education. Adult education drives have not succeeded, partly because of the one-sided developmental attitude of the teachers or the one-way traffic of knowledge. We have approached our illiterate adults with the wrong idea of only teaching them and not learning anything from them. Adult education in India has failed to be reciprocal in character. It has seldom been realized that most illiterate people are *educated* to a great extent in those spheres of life in which literate classes are *uneducated*. If we want to provide a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the village and the town, and between the classes, the teacher of adults must not only teach them to read and write but also learn from them the 'dignity of labour', feelings of brotherhood, innocence and simplicity of life, qualities which our educated people generally lack. Our adult education programmes, therefore, ought to be based on this 'give-and-take' relationship or on the two-way traffic of knowledge. This is a question of paramount importance in the new Republic of India if it desire to evolve without bloodshed into a classless society.

It thus follows that adult education should extend its frontiers and include in its programme the education of our so-called educated youth engaged in all stations of life. Social reformers who have so far been concentrating their energies upon rural areas alone should now turn their attention to the educated persons in cities and towns also. Our educated youth falls an easy victim to vicious propaganda. Unlike uneducated village-people, they are largely a source of communal disturbances and present unhappiness. Almost all the disruptive forces in modern society originate from our educated youth in the towns, and so it is they who deserve more of our attention today than the village-folk. The re-education of the so-called educated youth is, therefore, a matter of vital importance which should be given priority both for their own sake and for the sake of the illiterate masses. It would not matter very seriously if the illiterate masses remained ignorant for some more years to come in spite of the long-felt pressing need for their early emancipation.

The programme of social education, whether in a village or in a town, ought to be founded on psychological and scientific bases. Any attempt to place the task in immature hands with little faith in the work is bound to yield disheartening results. The education of adults is not a simple process uniformly applicable to all types of people, irrespective of their environments. An educational programme which does not take into account the characteristic environmental forces working upon a group of people, and determining their thoughts, attitudes and actions, will be futile. It should seek not only to bring about a proper adjustment of individuals and groups to their environment, but also to improve those environmental forces which make such adjustment difficult. This necessitates a thorough examination and study of the problems of social education in the country. Little has been done in our educational laboratories to discover the anatomy of social education and to devise a scientific methodology to tackle the gigantic problem. Social education has remained subordinated to the child's education with the result that our adventure has always been fragmentary and ineffective. I therefore suggest that it should form a subject of study, investigation and research in our universities, especially in teachers' training colleges and advanced schools of social work. We can hope for better results only when scientific methods of investigation of social evils, techniques and methodology are evolved.

The work of social education should proceed in two different directions, one towards the improvement of general environmental conditions and the other towards the advancement of various occupations of men and women. I suggest that in order to proceed with the work each State ought to be divided into homogeneous regions. Each region where the environmental forces and the group of people appear to behave alike should be subject to thorough study and research by experts in sociological sciences and social education. The field of study should include rural and urban areas, educated and illiterate population, general and vocational occupations, cultural, religious, ethical and moral traits, use of leisure, social environment of different age-groups, social institutions, social stratification, delinquency, family set-ups, links of co-operation or forces of disruption, human relationships, etc. On the basis of the findings, a workable content of social education suited to the local region and an efficient methodology should be evolved. The specific nature of the two inseparable sides of education, the ends and the means, will reveal the type of machinery or organization needed for the fulfilment of our cherished aims. The gulf which has been greatly responsible for the failures of our programmes in the past between the content of social education and the needs of the area, will thus be bridged.

It is worth while to elucidate the basis of all our attempts to implant in the adult a desire to rise in the scale of human existence. Economic improvement is only a bye-product of the desire to rise. If an urge to raise the community is developed in man's heart, many of the present ills, prejudices, fears and destructive forces which are checking human progress and happiness at every step will recede into the background. The focal point of social education, therefore, ought to be the inculcation of a longing for the emancipation of the individual and of the community at large based on an intelligent, critical and sympathetic understanding of the community, national and world problems. Such an identification with the common good will surely reveal itself in a myriad ways.

An important problem which demands attention is the organization of a machinery through which the task of social education can be successfully carried out. The experience of the past clearly demonstrates that the interference of outside elements with local affairs has been mainly responsible for the ineffectiveness of the programmes, especially because the reformers suffer from want of realism and zest, and the learners from want of interest and sense of responsibility in the execution of the programmes. Better results could be achieved if the responsibility of social education devolved upon the village communities themselves. Ever increasing initiative, interest and responsibility are bound to be taken by the villagers if they are enabled to raise funds and to manage their own affairs. The utility, in this respect, of the Gaon Panchayat Scheme of Uttar Pradesh which has been in operation now for nearly a year has been proved beyond doubt. Many village Panchayats or village republics have shown such initiative and interest in rural reconstruction as could hardly be imagined under the old order. Under self-help schemes, it is said, canals have been newly constructed, roads built and villages cleaned. Other self-initiated schemes include the protection of the village and the establishment of primary schools and centres of adult education. In the absence of a proper organization in villages, considerable difficulties were experienced in initial stages in inducing local people to take interest in the work. But, with the birth of properly functioning Panchayats, they took upon themselves the task of promoting welfare schemes in which the whole community co-operated. I know a case where a group of Panchayat watchmen drawn from different families, rich and poor alike, patrolled at night for months together on the outskirts of the village to keep off dacoits. If that high degree of initiative, responsibility and co-operation, together with the consequent liquidation of the age-long social stratification, could be awakened in such a short time through community projects, we can hope for a better social order in the near future in our country through social education programmes of the village communities. It is a hopeful sign. What the country should do at present is to set up a suitable machinery, by reviving the ancient system of village republics, the roots of which are even today alive and firm in the Indian soil.

CHAPTER XV

THE EDUCATION OF PARENTS

THERE are two different conceptions of adult education. One regards it "as the preparation of individuals for active participation within the framework of a community"—social or political. The other considers "the improvement of the intellectual standard of an adult" to be an end in itself. Literacy is only a phase of this larger educational venture. Both these views hold good in India.

Our real problem of education is that of educating the adults, and this, at least for two reasons. First, India needs better informed citizens (in the spheres of civic, social, economic and political life) and cannot wait twenty five years for children to grow into maturity and leadership. Secondly, the problems of millions of people in all stations of life, who have been unable to attend schools, must be solved.

Adults in India are in no way inferior to adults in advanced countries in respect of their physical and mental make-up. What they lack is confidence in their ability to learn. Many feel 'too old' to learn, and those with elementary schooling regard a return to a night school as fantastic. The idea that education is a life process and that adults learn more quickly than children, can be promoted among adults by providing suitable educative environment through various adult recreational activities in terms of their interests and needs.

Teachers have played their part in such undertakings and are still contributing a great deal. What I wish to sketch is a plan of Parent Education, both for fathers and mothers, who form the basic structure of our school as well as the community set-up. One is here advised to read the pamphlet *Homes to Build a Nation*, a publication of Associated Printers, Madras, where the ideal conditions of home life and ways and means of bringing them about are briefly discussed. It is a programme which will revolutionize our homes and rebuild our nation.

Parents can be classified as those who, having themselves remained ignorant, refuse to be influenced by education, and those who send their children to school. The sending of their children to school reflects the parents' attitude to their learning and their true appreciation of the values of the education which their children are receiving. Educated parents, on the other hand, realize the inadequacies of much of their own narrow academic and passive educational experiences, and the possibilities of the creative and co-operative educational activities of their children. If adult education enterprises are initiated by the second class of parents first, their ignorant neighbours are bound to be influenced. The parent community can provide a centrifugal force for the whole community. The desire to do the best for one's children is universal and leads parents to seek information which may be helpful in meeting the problems of family and community life in a dynamic world. Sparks of knowledge thus generated amongst parents are bound ultimately to kindle the imagination of other members of the community.

The school is the most far-reaching institutional agency for the spread of knowledge. Schools could also be used as centres of adult education for strengthening the neighbourhood. The job of the educator is to think not only in terms of his institution—the school and the child, but rather in terms of the school area. The educator—especially in a village—with his close contacts with the parents, has a real opportunity for preparing the entire community for change. His undertaking is truly an experiment in community-wide adult education.

There exists an incentive for learning on the part of the parent if the activities are centred round the child. He is often eager for child knowledge. To secure interest we must proceed from the immediate interest to the remote, —and from the child and his problems to the family and community problems. Success in this is likely to depend upon how the teacher motivates the parents to educative activity. The most natural source of motives is their parental instinct. Hence the utility of child-centred efforts to educate them. These natural tendencies are common to all parents and their response to them is more or less similar.

No matter what a person's profession is, he or she gets some leisure. The farmer gets time in the evenings, the mill worker now has more leisure with the shorter working day and the shorter working week under the labour laws, and other people engaged in the 'professions' have time to waste. The unemployed under current economic and social stress often spends his time in undesirable activities. Therefore, leisure is there; its effective utilization for constructive and creative ends is necessary. The Indian on the whole does not know the constructive use of leisure. He has now lost the ability for creative fun. Our ancestors in spare moments made beautiful objects for home use, they sang and engaged in folk dancing. Co-operation with members of other communities was their life interest. Leisure activities inspired a self-motivated participation on the part of a majority of our ancestors.

If parent education is approached aright, it is dynamic. Now I suggest a plan for parent education through our school organization—the Parent-Teacher Association. The recent growth of interest in the harmonious development of the child has made us realize the significance of Parent-Teacher Associations and these are being established in increasing numbers. Unfortunately, these institutions have not so far yielded the best possible results. This is due to the fact that parents are approached largely from the angle of the school. In rural areas particularly, they can be a valuable educative factor. Such experiments should grow out of the conviction that the surest way to promote good schools for children is to build a better community as a background. So parent education projects should be undertaken not as a substitute for the usual work of Parent-Teacher Associations, but in addition to the desirable activities which bring about better co-operation between the home and the school.

As this task will have to be undertaken by teachers, it should be broadly based upon the spirit of the Project Method. The method is sound, being based upon human psychology. Work on this method will become not an externally assigned, but rather a self-imposed, task undertaken because of a desire on the part of the parent himself. His attitude towards the enterprise will determine largely how well it will be done and how permanent and complete its educative results will be. The essence of parent education should be the child and its problems.

The consent and sympathy of parents is essential to all undertakings. Hence, the proposal should come from the parents, particularly from active members of the Parent-Teacher Association of the school. If teachers use tact and sincerity they will not fail to inspire initiative. Their duty is only to initiate a 'situation' in the Parent-Teacher Association meetings.

After the preliminary work, the proposal should be freely discussed at an open meeting. A questionnaire may be issued to every parent under the following chief heads:–

(1) Their impressions about the uniqueness of this proposal and their approval of the idea.

(2) The names of members who could lead or assist in conducting activity groups or forums.

(3) Their suggestions regarding convenient meeting centres.

(4) Their suggestions and preferences as to subjects for discussion and activities. The last item is highly important because it refers to the syllabus of activities. Multitudes of economic, civic and social questions press on us. They relate to family, local, state, national and world problems. The discussions should centre round such current problems of the day.

These forums should be held weekly or fortnightly, not generally in the school, but in homes or public places as suggested by parents. Each meeting may be preceded by light music or group singing. Speeches, questions, participation by experts, reference to reading material, search for information–both through personal contact and print –should be encouraged. For outdoor activities they should be led to participate in social movements outside the family which can stimulate civic and social consciousness. The group should be led by parents, but the teachers' active interest and participation is a necessity. Summers will be available to teachers for study and research on the topics assigned. These contacts will bring happiness and profit to the teachers themselves. They will broaden their outlook and provide an opportunity for studying sociology, because the parents engage in a variety of occupations and come from various social and racial groups. And lastly, they will help to shape the destinies of the coming generation.

The womenfolk of our country are not likely to attend these adult forums. The common reasons for their non-attendance are shyness, lack of interest, home duties, economic reasons such as lack of clothing and conveyance, social subjection, domination, etc. In mixed schools, they find adjustment difficult because of the purdah.

India has changed radically in many ways in recent years, and so have millions of her men. But women, particularly mothers who mould the character of the child and lay out the pattern for his entire life, have changed little. In most homes conditions of family life are not ideal. Husband and wife do not give unselfish love to each other in every aspect of their relationship. There is dictatorship and domination by the strong. For some women the home is a prison. Greater recognition should be given to their rights and privileges, and education is the surest and the only solution of the problem.

For women we need Mothers' Clubs. It is customary for women in India to assemble in a neighbour's house during the afternoon till their husbands return from their offices, schools or factories. They probably discuss their children's problems when they meet. The parent education of today should be but an extension of these interchanges of ideas and experiences. A mother will learn indirectly something from other mothers faced with similar problems. These clubs will make the mothers of the community take their rightful place in the home, the community and the State,—the three chief factors in an individual's life.

Every wife in India should have opportunities to educate herself in such clubs where her individual needs are considered. To acquaint her with her responsibilities towards her children and to enable her to fulfil them intelligently, a plan of education related to her own experiences and interests is needed. These clubs should provide discussions of home and family affairs, elementary economics, community problems and social and child psychology. To understand how children develop physically, emotionally and socially, is valuable and immediately satisfying to every mother.

How can teachers help in starting these clubs for mothers, a majority of whom are illiterate? If the teacher can enlist the co-operation of some enthusiastic parents who would assist him in running the clubs, his task will be facilitated. Cultured and advanced mothers may be assigned various localities.

These clubs should meet in the afternoon, or in the evening, so that the majority of mothers can attend. Meetings should be open to all. There is an urgent need of materials for such clubs. The whole problem of materials must be taken into account, as the movement grows, by the city and State departments of education and other public bodies.

The parent education projects are based on the conviction that education for adults in India should proceed from the whole to the part, from creating educative environments related to people's needs and interests to reading and writing and then from the printed page to wider knowledge. This method is both natural and sound. Side by side with this movement, the establishment of night schools for adults for the teaching of the three R's should also receive adequate attention.

EDUCATION IN FREE INDIA is the third of Longmans New Era Series. We are planning a number of studies which will deal with the manifold problems facing every country in the world in the immediate future, with special reference to the problems facing India and her neighbours. These studies, whether they are pamphlets or full-length books, will be written in non-technical language and will make interesting reading for the general public as well as for the specialist in Economics or Education or Politics or Commerce.

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